420

420

S.S.
BES.
SHO

CULVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Culver, Indiana

RULES

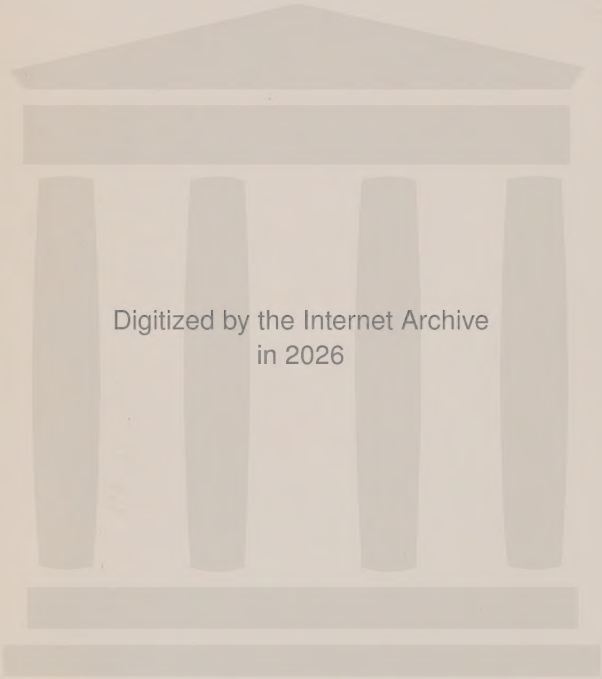
1. Books may be kept two weeks and may be renewed once for the same period, except 7 day books and magazines.
2. A fine of two cents a day will be charged on each book which is not returned according to the above rule. No book will be issued to any person incurring such a fine until it has been paid.
3. All injuries to books, beyond reasonable wear, and all losses shall be made good to the satisfaction of the Librarian.
4. Each borrower is held responsible for all books drawn on his card and for all fines accruing on the same.

LIBRARY BUREAU CAT. NO. 1175.3

Book may be kept

FOURTEEN DAYS

[illegible] CENTS will be [illegible]


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/bestshortstories0000konr_i2f1

Best Short Stories of the World

Edited with an Introduction by

KONRAD BERCOVICI

GARDEN CITY PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.
Garden City *New York*

Copyright, 1917 by the Macmillan Company
Copyright, 1922 by A. Knopf
Copyright, 1922 by B. W. Huebsch
Copyright by Frank Harris
Copyright, 1925 by The Stratford Company

Printed in the United States of America

Foreword

Our thanks are due to the following editors, publishers and authors, for their kind permission to reprint in this volume stories for which they control the rights:

Mr. A. Knopf for *Mme. Tellier's Establishment,* by Guy de Maupassant, reprinted from the book "Boule de Suif" and for the *Life of Ma Parker* by Katherine Mansfield from the book "Garden Party"; the Macmillan Company for *The Party,* by Anton Chekhov, reprinted from the book "The Party"; Mr. Frank Harris for *Montes the Matador;* Mr. B. W. Huebsch for *I'm a Fool,* by Sherwood Anderson, reprinted from the book "Horses and Men."

I am indebted to Miss Helena K. Simkhovitch for her invaluable help in the editing of this book.

THE AUTHOR.

420

Contents

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 1

Anatole France

THE PROCURATOR OF JUDEA 19

Translated by Frederick Chapman

Honoré de Balzac

A PASSION IN THE DESERT 41

J. L. Perez

BONTJE THE SILENT 61

Translated by H. T. S.

Oscar Wilde

THE BIRTHDAY OF THE INFANTA 75

Catulle Mendès

THE LOST WORDS OF LOVE 103

Translated by Thomas Seltzer

Sherwood Anderson

I'M A FOOL 111

I. L. Caragiale

THE EASTER TORCH 129

Translated by Lucy Byng

Maxim Gorki

MAKAR CHUDRA 153

English Version by H. T. S.

CONTENTS

A Gypsy Legend
THE FOURTH NAIL 177

Leo Tolstoi
WHAT MEN LIVE BY 185

Katherine Mansfield
LIFE OF MA PARKER 217

Guy de Maupassant
MADAME TELLIER'S ESTABLISHMENT . . . 229

Leonid Andreyev
LAZARUS 273
Translated by A. Yarmolinsky

Ivan Bunin
THE GENTLEMAN FROM SAN FRANCISCO . . 303
Translated by A. Yarmolinsky

Multatuli (Edward D. Dekker)
SAIDJAH 339

Frank Harris
MONTES 347

GENESIS CHAPTERS 1-3 403

Edgar Allan Poe
THE GOLD-BUG 411

Anton Chekhov
THE PARTY 467
Translated by Constance Garnett

Introduction

I BELIEVE the short story to be the highest form of literary art. The best of Balzac, Anatole France, Maupassant, Tolstoi, Turgeneff, Chekhov, Conrad, Sherwood Anderson, Poe and others is to be found in their short stories. No other literary form exacts so much intense concentration on subject and form. No other form permits so little padding. The inner life of a short story, the style, the value of the theme and the construction of its characters must be of one piece with the directness and the straightness of the line running through it.

In a novel one goes on painting background and character with a continual adjustment in each, and between one and the other. The background can be lightened to sharpen the relief of the characters; the background can be darkened to heighten the effect of the lightness of the scene. Neither writer nor reader keeps a definite picture of the whole from beginning to end.

In a short story no such thing is possible. There is no slow adjustment between background and character, between background and development. The whole story, the whole picture, the action, background, character, development, must first be in the mind of the story teller before it is definitely transferred to paper or told. The difference between the technique of a short story and that of a novel is the difference between sculpture and painting.

In the art of painting, the painter has before him a canvas upon which he adds from the palette of colors in his hand through the brush such pigments of color as he wants to transfer to it. He looks before him at what he sees, or brings back from his memory what he has once seen, and transfers it to the canvas. And if the colors jar, he can always tone one color down by the opposition of another from his palette, and begin anew where he does not like the effect or where it does not correspond with his growing ideas.

The idea grows and changes with the work. Carving from a block is a different process. The artist has to bring to his block a complete, definite idea of what he intends to do; for what he has once carved out can not be put back. Every stroke of the chisel and hammer counts; is irremediable. Every stroke has either brought him forward toward the uncovering from within the block of the image he has had in his mind, or has destroyed it forever. Painting is an art of adding on to. Carving is an art of eliminating. This is artistically the difference between the novel and the short story. And the more the artist has had to eliminate before the story has clarified itself in his mind, the finer and the stronger the story has a chance to be. What is not absolutely essential in a short story destroys its artistic quality.

A good short story almost invariably contains the elements of a great novel. The best novel only very rarely contains the elements from which one could build a short story.

Introduction

Fiction writers pour themselves out in short stories, while in the fullness of their creative energy relying on their continuing virility for the future. It is only when the peak is past that one begins to be more economical with the inventive faculty, and turns towards the novel from the all too exhausting, all too concentrated short story.

It is significant that the best short story tellers of all times have been people of extreme mental and physical virility.

Some time ago I read a French book in which the author proves that the greatest men of all times have been of illegitimate origin. He cited a long list of names, which included da Vinci, Beethoven and Wagner. The conclusion he drew was that the greatness of these men was rooted in the fact that they were conceived by their parents at the height of passion.

This conclusion is strongly supported by popular opinion the world over. The term "bastard," when used with a certain tone, implies high intelligence, and is even used as flattery on certain occasions. The array of witnesses brought to support this theory is formidable.

A short story is the result of conception at the height of passion.

The power of the Bible resides not in the unity of its structure,—it has anything but that,—but in the succession of powerful short stories. In the Anglo-Saxon countries, where it is more read than in other countries, the Bible has had tremendous influence upon the short

story form, even the addiction to a happy ending having originated in the Bible. There the villain usually receives his due punishment, and the worthy in time his due reward. Every chapter of the Bible is a short story. Every conceivable kind of short story is contained in it. The ultra-realistic is represented as well as the symbolic. Were one to translate them into every day verbiage one could make them sound as modern as if they had been written yesterday by one of our best practitioners. Almost every story in the Bible has been modernized, consciously or unconsciously, by short story writers. One could play indefinitely with the ideas found in it. The Joseph and Potiphar story, the Ruth and Naomi story, the Job story, the Jacob and his sons story, have been done over and again and are constantly being done, with changes of locale and names of course, and other twists to suit modern conditions; but the short story pattern is to be found in the Bible.

* * * *

When the publishers asked me to edit a volume of what I considered the best twenty short stories in the world, regardless of time or language, I plunged into the work with great zest and gaiety. Nothing seemed easier. It seemed to me that I could think of twenty of the best short stories within a few moments, from the hundreds of short stories I have read and remembered. Yet, when it came to the actual selection I discovered that a good many stories I had read only a few years ago no longer held water. It seemed to me my ideas of quality had completely changed

the minute I was asked to put down on paper my final selection of the best. There were stories of the quality of which I had always felt certain, which when weighed for definite selection fell so considerably short that I wondered what had happened to me or to the story. I had to resift all the old and a good deal of the new. I had to meet my conceit face to face and rearrange my old standards to suit my new perceptions.

When I had finally made my selection I discovered new difficulties. There were frequently only inadequate translations in English of stories written in other languages, and often no translations at all. Then there were other difficulties. Publishers and copyright owners refused permission for stories I would have loved to include in the book. Thus stories that I decidedly wanted included became eliminated. I was again forced to rearrange my list to meet these conditions.

* * * *

The stories in this volume were selected for no other reason than because I think they are among the best short stories. They are perhaps not the most celebrated stories; that consideration did not concern me at all in my selection of them. It was only the quality of the story that mattered. The didactic value of the story did not concern me either, nor had morality or immorality anything to do with my selection. I have not set out to prove that such and such a school of short stories was better than any other. Though we have frequently heard of the Russian school of the short story, usually with reference to

Chekhov and Gorki, and of the French school of the short story with reference to Maupassant and Balzac, as a matter of fact Chekhov learned a good deal from Maupassant, Maupassant learned a good deal from Balzac, and Balzac learned a good deal from Rabelais, who in turn had other masters. There is no school in any art. The one who does his work according to this or that other master is an artisan, not an artist. The artist has his own path. The artist is an explorer. The merchant and the immigrant follow in his path.

* * * *

The term "short story" is a misnomer. There is no reason why a form of art should be called by what is supposed to be its length or its quantity of words. We have a far better name than that in English, which more adequately calls to mind its form. The French call it "Conte." The Germans "Erzählung." "Tale" is an excellent English word translating their meaning. It is really too bad that this word has been warped so that it immediately calls to mind the fairy tale. Yet, perhaps in its essence the short story is nothing else!

* * * *

There is no story that so successfully creates something out of nothing as the one beginning, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." God, the earth, the sky, and all that is between them and upon the earth and the waters, including man and animal, are created out of nothing right before our eyes. And the "flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of

life," is the most vivid picture in all literature. The conception of life and the meaning of life has been changed for many generations and countries, for millions of men, by this tale.

* * * *

Who but Anatole France could have compressed in one paragraph so important a tragedy as that of the man from Nazareth? Who but he could have reduced the tragedy to its proportionate importance at the time it took place, before it had spread and become a religion which should change the "weltanschaung" of countless millions and countless generations? Within the few pages of THE PROCURATOR OF JUDEA is compressed more of the history of the Jews than has been given in heavy, labored tomes. Rome's struggle to keep foreign populations in subjection, attempting to compel them to live as Rome wanted them to live, think as Rome wanted them to think, and worship as Rome wanted them to worship, is set forth in great effect of detail in a few lines. The essence of Roman history, philosophy and method of government has nowhere been set forth with such clarity and beauty, and with such precision as in the story of the great French master.

* * * *

I have chosen A PASSION IN THE DESERT, by Balzac, in preference to others of his stories, not because I consider it his best. As I am thinking it over even now there are many others that I might have preferred. But the description of the tiger in the desert in this story kept

on singing in my ears. It is not the soldier who is the hero of the story; it is the tiger. To most of us tigers are all alike. It would indeed be difficult for the ordinary man to distinguish one from another. Yet the particular tiger described by Balzac in this story detaches itself from all other tigers and becomes a distinct personality, unlike any other tiger in any desert. You can see the animal move. You can hear it purr. You are carried along by its strange passion for the man, and at the end when you see it die, your pulse stops suddenly, as though you had witnessed the death of some dear misunderstood one.

* * * *

BONTJE THE SILENT, by J. L. Perez; THE BIRTHDAY OF THE INFANTA, by Oscar Wilde; THE LOST WORDS OF LOVE, by Catulle Mendès; three fairy tales! Nowhere in his writings does Wilde the artist reveal himself so forcefully as in this fairy tale. His groping for the *outré,* for the decadent, for the something so fragile you could shatter it to pieces breathing on it ever so softly, is revealed in this story. Where is there a sentence with more color than this?

"The purple butterflies fluttered about with gold dust on their wings, visiting each flower in turn; the little lizards crept out of the crevices of the wall, and lay basking in the white glare; and the pomegranates split and cracked with the heat, and showed their bleeding red hearts. Even the pale yellow lemons, that hung in such profusion from the mouldering trellis and along the dim arcades, seemed to have caught a richer color from the

wonderful sunlight, and the magnolia trees opened their great globe-like blossoms of folded ivory, and filled the air with a sweet heavy perfume."

And who but Wilde could have written the cruel lines at the end of the story? The Chamberlain has listened to the heart of the dead dwarf, broken by the Infanta of Spain, and she has received the answer to her question, why he will not dance again.

"And the Infanta frowned, and her dainty rose-leaf lips curled in pretty disdain.

" 'For the future let those who come to play with me have no hearts,' she cried, and she ran out into the garden."

* * * *

I shall say only a few words about BONTJE THE SILENT, by J. L. Perez, because of my deep reverence for the departed master. Alas, only too little known to the world at large, this great Yiddish master reached a perfection in his short story writing equalled by few if any of our modern writers.

Bontje the silent was asked by the highest judge to name whatever he wished. Bontje had never uttered a word against God or man, and it was because of his silence that the highest judge wished to recompense him in heaven. Bontje had been silent when his father, in a drunken fit, had thrown him out of the house at night in the midst of a blizzard. Bontje had been silent when he was thrown into jail. He had been silent when he was given the hardest work. And he had been silent when he had been spat

upon by strangers. He had been silent when he was not paid for his work. He had never said a word when he was paid for it with a counterfeit coin. He had even been silent when the man whose life he had saved by stopping his runaway horse made him his coachman, and in due time presented him with a wife and provided him with a child. Bontje remained silent when this child grew up and threw him out of the house. Bontje accepted everything with silence, because it was as God wanted it to be. And now Bontje is asked to tell the highest judge what he desires to be his recompense.

"'All is yours. Everything in heaven belongs to you. Just take whatever you wish, you take only what is yours.'

"'Really?' asks Bontje once more, but in a firmer voice this time.

"'Yes, indeed yes,' they answer him reassuringly on all sides.

"'If that is the case,' smiles Bontje, 'I'd love to get every single day a big hot bun with fresh butter.'

"And then the judges and angels lowered their eyes abashed."

Read BONTJE THE SILENT a hundred times over.

* * * *

THE LOST WORDS OF LOVE shows the far cry from Perez to Catulle Mendès. It is the story of the poet lover, to whom after all to find a good rhyme is much more important than the love of his queen. The sarcasm, the beauty, the depth and the wisdom of this story leave

one speechless. It is as if wrought out of rose honey, and the sting of the bee.

* * * *

From these delicate traceries to Sherwood Anderson's rugged tale of love, the transit may seem abrupt at first. But the real difference is only in the method of telling the tale. Wilde and Catulle Mendès, had they been musicians instead of writers, would have told their stories as Chopin and Mozart have told theirs. The ruggedness of Anderson is the ruggedness of Brahms and the apparent turgidity of Beethoven before the theme emerges from the chaos in which it has been plunged. I have read I'M A FOOL a dozen times over and again, and have come away from the reading each time more impressed by its force and its poetry. Who can ever forget the longing for physical pain of the poor fool, whose heart has been broken.

"'If I had an arm broke right now or a train had run over my foot—I wouldn't go to no doctor at all. I'd go set down and let her hurt and hurt—that's what I'd do.'"

* * * *

It is now fully twenty-five years since I read for the first time THE EASTER TORCH, by I. L. Caragiale. We lived fifteen hours' ride from Bucharest. But after I had read the story I had no other desire so compelling as that of going to see the man who had written that tale. I read it over and over again, so frequently that I could recite it by heart, as if it were a poem, from the first word to the last. In the enthusiasm of youth the tale seemed to me the last word in literature, that everything written

after that would be but weak imitation; and I was raging at the stupidity of mankind because I did not see its effect upon literature immediately afterward.

Six months later I was enabled to go to see the great master. I did not dream of talking to him or telling him what I felt. I only wanted to feast my eyes upon him and if possible, if the gods should be good to me, to hear his voice. On arriving in Bucharest I was informed that he occasionally came down towards sunset to a certain café. And though my meagre resources were dwindling fast, I spent the greater part of my money every evening sitting at that café and watching the door. It was only after my last reserve had given out that the gods favored me. A gay little man, who had dined and wined perhaps a little too well, came in with a number of friends and sat down at a table not far from where I sat. It was eight o'clock in the evening. At twenty minutes past eight there was a train for home. I had both seen him and heard his voice.

THE EASTER TORCH has not lost for me either its intensity or its grip. The terror of Leiba Zibal, who suspects his disgruntled servant George has come to kill him the night of Easter, still makes one shudder. George is on the other side of the door. Now George with his friend have come to murder the Jew and his family. They are outside the heavy door. Leiba Zibal on the other side feels the touch of the men as they measure the distance of the wood. And from then on he ceases to exist. It is no longer Leiba Zibal, but another person that has been

awakened in him by the danger to himself and to his family. The plan of the men outside is apparent enough to him. They will bore four holes from the outside under the beam that holds the door closed. Then they will connect these holes with a saw. George will then lift the bar from its place by pushing his hand through the hole.

In the burning brain of Leiba the image of the gimlet takes on inconceivable dimensions. The instrument turning continually grows indefinitely and the opening becomes larger and larger, large enough for the monster to step through the round aperture without having to bend. What surges through a brain under such conditions transcends the thoughts of man. Life rises to such a pitch of exaltation that everything seen, heard, felt, appears enormous and the sense of proportion becomes chaotic. The description of what goes on in Leiba Zibal's brain while George is boring through the wood is one of the most masterful descriptions of abnormal psychology I have ever read. And when horror has reached its highest pitch, Leiba Zibal ceases to tremble and becomes serene, as if his spirit had completely detached itself from his body.

What happens afterwards is unexpected and meets the cruelty of the man outside. The mild, submissive, sensitive Jew meets the monsters from the other side of the door with as much cruelty as possesses them. For the benefit of those who will not understand the importance of the paragraph before the last, I must explain that there is an old Jewish tradition to the effect that whoever lights a candle or a torch on the night of Easter proclaims him-

self a Christian. It is because he has lit a torch to save his family that Leiba Zibal is going to tell the Rabbi that he is a Jew no longer. "And the man moved slowly up the hill" . . . Like Christ carrying his cross up to Golgotha.

* * * *

In MAKAR CHUDRA, Maxim Gorki revealed himself to the world of letters. It was his first story. It appeared in some little paper in Russia, but it attracted immediate attention to the man who wrote it. It is a gypsy tale of passion and love, such as Gorki himself has not equalled in the best of his later writings.

In some place in the story the difference in the conception of life between the Russian and the gypsy is set forth as follows:

Says the gypsy: "I have been in jail. It was in Galicia and I had plenty of time to philosophize there. What am I in this world for, I used to ask myself? I would get this thought in my head just to break the monotony. For it certainly was monotonous there. At such moments my heart was bursting with longing whenever I looked at the fields through the prison bars. My heart was held as in a vise. Yes, Falcon, we live in this world and that is all. Who knows why? Nobody. And it is useless to ask. LIVE, LIVE FULLY. KEEP WANDERING AND LOOK ABOUT YOU, AND YOU WILL NEVER LONG FOR THAT WHICH YOU HAVE'NT GOT, NEVER. At that time I could have strangled myself with my girdle. Yes, Falcon, I have been through it all.

"Um. Once I spoke to a man. He was a fine fellow,

one of you, a Russian. He said, 'You ought to live not as you like but as God has ordained. Only throw yourself at God's feet and he will give you everything that you pray for.' And yet this chap himself wore a ragged suit full of holes. I told him to get a new suit of clothes with his prayers, whereupon he became angry, cursed and drove me away from him. Up to that time he had been preaching forgiveness and love. He should therefore have forgiven me when I offended his pride with my words. There is a teacher for you! They teach you to eat less, and they themselves eat ten times a day."

And there is the story of Radda, Danila's daughter, of whom the gypsy said "her loveliness can only be expressed by means of the violin." And yet how many hearts did she not ruin! And when the rich man came to buy Radda for a wife Danila reflected that this was the custom only among gentlemen. "They sell everything from pigs to their consciences." And he who had fought under Kossuth refused to sell anything. When the question was put to Radda herself she answered, "If the daughter of an eagle were to go of her own free will into the nest of a raven, what would she become then?"

And suddenly a horse steps out of the darkness, and upon this horse sits a man playing a fiddle. "He looked as if chiseled out, chiseled out of one piece together with his horse." And when he had played his violin Radda said to him:

"You play beautifully. Who made you this fiddle with such rich, full tones?"

And then Loyko, swaggering, laughed. "I myself have made it. Not out of wood but out of the breast of a young girl, and the strings I have fashioned by intertwining her heart strings. And it is still somewhat false, this fiddle."

It is the love story of Radda and Loyko that Gorki is telling us, vibrant with the melancholy music of the steppes and the fiery passion of the gypsy, tempered by the wisdom of life uttered by the older man round the burning embers of the campfire.

"Heighho ! Let us gallop away
"From the night to the gates of the day!
"Let us scatter the mantle of mist
"Where the hills by the sunrise are kissed.

"We will ride with the sun till the night
"And spatter the sky with our light;
"We will leap into midnight from noon
"And rest on the tip of the moon."

* * * *

I do not know where the story of THE FOURTH NAIL, as told to me by Murdo, the gypsy chief, originated. I have heard the same tale told by different gypsies. The details of the story were different each time, but the essence of it was always the same. In its simplicity, purity and directness it is a masterpiece of story telling. It stands out as clearly outlined as an Egyptian bas-relief, and is as pregnant with meaning as the story of the Holy Grail.

Of WHAT MEN LIVE BY, by Tolstoi, Katherine Mansfield's LIFE OF MA PARKER, MADAME TELLIER'S ESTABLISHMENT, by Guy de Maupassant; Andreyev's LAZARUS, Ivan Bunin's GENTLEMAN FROM SAN FRANCISCO; and other stories in the book, I have little else to say but that they represent for me the best there is in short story writing. But of SAIDJAH, by Multatuli, almost unknown here, yet a litérateur of considerable reputation in Europe, I want to say that he has been the first one, long before Kipling, to write of life in the East Indies. A Dutch government employé, his stories of India as well as his acts there displeased this government so much that he was dismissed without thanks from its employ. His novel, MAX HAVELAR, disturbed the Dutch government so much that it was suppressed on its appearance, and Multatuli never regained favor in his own country after its publication in another country. SAIDJAH is the sad, sad story of the lives and loves of the people in the East Indies.

"The people of Batavia held a grand celebration over the splendid victory in the East Indies that had brought fresh laurels to the Dutch. The government wrote home that the inhabitants of Campong were peaceful again. The soldiers were decorated with crosses for bravery and the priests were offering up prayers of thankfulness because the Lord of Hosts, fighting always for the right, had once more fought upon the side of the Dutch."

Of Frank Harris' MONTES THE MATADOR, it would be impudent to say anything else but that the master

himself had told me it was his favorite story, and that Meredith has said that it was perhaps the greatest story in the English language. Without wanting to subscribe either to Meredith's reservation or to his expression without it, I have always considered this one of the great stories of the world.

The Procurator of Judea

(Le Procurateur de Judée)

By Anatole France

Translated by Frederick Chapman

LÆLIUS LAMIA, born in Italy of illustrious parents, had not yet discarded the *toga prætexta* when he set out for the schools of Athens to study philosophy. Subsequently he took up his residence at Rome, and in his house on the Esquiline, amid a circle of youthful wastrels, abandoned himself to licentious courses. But being accused of engaging in criminal relations with Lepida, the wife of Sulpicius Quirinus, a man of consular rank, and being found guilty, he was exiled by Tiberius Cæsar. At that time he was just entering his twenty-fourth year. During the eighteen years that his exile lasted he traversed Syria, Palestine, Cappadocia, and Armenia, and made prolonged visits to Antioch, Cæsarea, and Jerusalem. When, after the death of Tiberius, Caius was raised to the purple, Lamia obtained permission to return to Rome. He even regained a portion of his possessions. Adversity had taught him wisdom.

He avoided all intercourse with the wives and daughters of Roman citizens, made no efforts toward obtaining office, held aloof from public honours, and lived a secluded life in his house on the Esquiline. Occupying himself with

the task of recording all the remarkable things he had seen during his distant travels, he turned, as he said, the vicissitudes of his years of expiation into a diversion for his hours of rest. In the midst of these calm enjoyments, alternating with assiduous study of the works of Epicurus, he recognized with a mixture of surprise and vexation that age was stealing upon him. In his sixty-second year, being afflicted with an illness which proved in no slight degree troublesome, he decided to have recourse to the waters at Baiæ. The coast at that point, once frequented by the halcyon, was at this date the resort of the wealthy Roman, greedy of pleasure. For a week Lamia lived alone, without a friend in the brilliant crowd. Then one day, after dinner, an inclination to which he yielded urged him to ascend the inclines, which, covered with vines that resembled bacchantes, looked out upon the waves.

Having reached the summit he seated himself by the side of a path beneath a terebinth, and let his glances wander over the lovely landscape. To his left, livid and bare, the Phlegræan plain stretched out towards the ruins of Cumæ. On his right, Cape Misenum plunged its abrupt spur beneath the Tyrrhenian sea. Beneath his feet luxurious Baiæ, following the graceful outline of the coast, displayed its gardens, its villas thronged with statues, its porticos, its marble terraces along the shores of the blue ocean where the dolphins sported. Before him, on the other side of the bay, on the Campanian coast, gilded by the already sinking sun, gleamed the temples which far away rose above the laurels of Posilippo,

whilst on the extreme horizon Vesuvius looked forth smiling.

Lamia drew from a fold of his toga a scroll containing the *Treatise upon Nature,* extended himself upon the ground, and began to read. But the warning cries of a slave necessitated his rising to allow of the passage of a litter which was being carried along the narrow pathway through the vineyards. The litter being uncurtained, permitted Lamia to see stretched upon the cushions as it was borne nearer to him the figure of an elderly man of immense bulk, who, supporting his head on his hand, gazed out with a gloomy and disdainful expression. His nose, which was aquiline, and his chin, which was prominent, seemed desirous of meeting across his lips, and his jaws were powerful.

From the first moment Lamia was convinced that the face was familiar to him. He hesitated a moment before the name came to him. Then suddenly hastening towards the litter with a display of surprise and delight—

"Pontius Pilate!" he cried. "The gods be praised who have permitted me to see you once again!"

The old man gave a signal to the slaves to stop, and cast a keen glance upon the stranger who had addressed him.

"Pontius, my dear host," resumed the latter, "have twenty years so far whitened my hair and hollowed my cheeks that you no longer recognise your friend Lælius Lamia?"

At this name Pontius Pilate dismounted from the litter as actively as the weight of his years and the heaviness of his gait permitted him, and embraced Lælius Lamia again and again.

"Gods! what a treat it is to me to see you once more! But, alas, you call up memories of those long-vanished days when I was Procurator of Judæa, in the province of Syria. Why, it must be thirty years ago that I first met you. It was at Cæsarea, whither you came to drag out your weary term of exile. I was fortunate enough to alleviate it a little, and out of friendship, Lamia, you followed me to that depressing place Jerusalem, where the Jews filled me with bitterness and disgust. You remained for more than ten years my guest and my companion, and in converse about Rome and things Roman we both of us managed to find consolation—you for your misfortunes, and I for my burdens of State."

Lamia embraced him afresh.

"You forget two things, Pontius; you are overlooking the facts that you used your influence on my behalf with Herod Antipas, and that your purse was freely open to me."

"Let us not talk of that," replied Pontius, "since after your return to Rome you sent me by one of your freedmen a sum of money which repaid me with usury."

"Pontius, I could never consider myself out of your debt by the mere payment of money. But tell me, have the gods fulfilled your desires? Are you in the enjoy-

ment of all the happiness you deserve? Tell me about your family, your fortunes, your health."

"I have withdrawn to Sicily, where I possess estates, and where I cultivate wheat for the market. My eldest daughter, my best-beloved Pontia, who has been left a widow, lives with me, and directs my household. The gods be praised, I have preserved my mental vigour; my memory is not in the least degree enfeebled. But old age always brings in its train a long procession of griefs and infirmities. I am cruelly tormented with gout. And at this very moment you find me on my way to the Phlegræan plain in search of a remedy for my sufferings. From that burning soil, whence at night flames burst forth, proceed acrid exhalations of sulphur, which, so they say, ease the pains and restore suppleness to the stiffened joints. At least, the physicians assure me that it is so."

"May you find it so in your case, Pontius! But, despite the gout and its burning torments, you scarcely look as old as myself, although in reality you must be my senior by ten years. Unmistakably you have retained a greater degree of vigour than I ever possessed, and I am overjoyed to find you looking so hale. Why, dear friend, did you retire from the public service before the customary age? Why, on resigning your governorship in Judæa, did you withdraw to a voluntary exile on your Sicilian estates? Give me an account of your doings from the moment that I ceased to be a witness of them. You were preparing to suppress a Samaritan rising when I set out for Cappadocia, where I hoped to draw some profit from

the breeding of horses and mules. I have not seen you since then. How did that expedition succeed? Pray tell me. Everything interests me that concerns you in any way."

Pontius Pilate sadly shook his head.

"My natural disposition," he said, "as well as a sense of duty, impelled me to fulfil my public responsibilities, not merely with diligence, but even with ardour. But I was pursued by unrelenting hatred. Intrigues and calumnies cut short my career in its prime, and the fruit it should have looked to bear has withered away. You ask me about the Samaritan insurrection. Let us sit down on this hillock. I shall be able to give you an answer in few words. These occurrences are as vividly present to me as if they had happened yesterday.

"A man of the people, of persuasive speech—there are many such to be met with in Syria—induced the Samaritans to gather together in arms on Mount Gerizim (which in that country is looked upon as a holy place) under the promise that he would disclose to their sight the sacred vessels which in the ancient days of Evander and our father, Æneas, had been hidden away by an eponymous hero, or rather a tribal deity, named Moses. Upon this assurance the Samaritans rose in rebellion; but having been warned in time to forestall them, I dispatched detachments of infantry to occupy the mountain, and stationed cavalry to keep the approaches to it under observation.

"These measures of prudence were urgent. The rebels were already laying siege to the town of Tyrathaba, situated at the foot of Mount Gerizim. I easily dispersed them, and stifled the as yet scarcely organized revolt. Then, in order to give a forcible example with as few victims as possible, I handed over to execution the leaders of the rebellion. But you are aware, Lamia, in what straight dependence I was kept by the proconsul Vitellius, who governed Syria not in, but against the interests of Rome, and looked upon the provinces of the empire as territories which could be farmed out to tetrarchs. The head men among the Samaritans, in their resentment against me, came and fell at his feet lamenting. To listen to them, nothing had been further from their thoughts than to disobey Cæsar. It was I who had provoked the rising, and it was purely in order to withstand my violence that they had gathered together around Tyrathaba. Vitellius listened to their complaints, and handing over the affairs of Judæa to his friend Marcellus, commanded me to go and justify my proceedings before the Emperor himself. With a heart overflowing with grief and resentment I took ship. Just as I approached the shores of Italy, Tiberius, worn out with age and the cares of empire, died suddenly on the self-same Cape Misenum, whose peak we see from this very spot magnified in the mists of evening. I demanded justice of Caius, his successor, whose perception was naturally acute, and who was acquainted with Syrian affairs. But marvel with me, Lamia, at the maliciousness of fortune, resolved on my

discomfiture. Caius then had in his suite at Rome the Jew Agrippa, his companion, the friend of his childhood, whom he cherished as his own eyes. Now Agrippa favoured Vitellius, inasmuch as Vitellius was the enemy of Antipas, whom Agrippa pursued with his hatred. The Emperor adopted the prejudices of his beloved Asiatic, and refused even to listen to me. There was nothing for me to do but bow beneath the stroke of unmerited misfortune. With tears for my meat and gall for my portion, I withdrew to my estates in Sicily, where I should have died of grief if my sweet Pontia had not come to console her father. I have cultivated wheat, and succeeded in producing the fullest ears in the whole province. But now my life is ended; the future will judge between Vitellius and me."

"Pontius," replied Lamia, "I am persuaded that you acted towards the Samaritans according to the rectitude of your character, and solely in the interests of Rome. But were you not perchance on that occasion a trifle too much influenced by that impetuous courage which has always swayed you? You will remember that in Judæa it often happened that I who, younger than you, should naturally have been more impetuous than you, was obliged to urge you to clemency and suavity."

"Suavity towards the Jews!" cried Pontius Pilate. "Although you have lived amongst them, it seems clear that you ill understand those enemies of the human race. Haughty and at the same time base, combining an invincible obstinacy with a despicably mean spirit, they weary

alike your love and your hatred. My character, Lamia, was formed upon the maxims of the divine Augustus. When I was appointed Procurator of Judæa, the world was already penetrated with the majestic ideal of the *pax romana*. No longer, as in the days of our internecine strife, were we witnesses to the sack of a province for the aggrandisement of a proconsul. I knew where my duty lay. I was careful that my actions should be governed by prudence and moderation. The gods are my witnesses that I was resolved upon mildness, and upon mildness only. Yet what did my benevolent intentions avail me? You were at my side, Lamia, when, at the outset of my career as ruler, the first rebellion came to a head. Is there any need for me to recall the details to you? The garrison had been transferred from Cæsarea to take up its winter quarters at Jerusalem. Upon the ensigns of the legionaries appeared the presentment of Cæsar. The inhabitants of Jerusalem, who did not recognize the indwelling divinity of the Emperor, were scandalized at this, as though, when obedience is compulsory, it were not less abject to obey a god than a man. The priests of their nation appeared before my tribunal imploring me with supercilious humility to have the ensigns removed from within the holy city. Out of reverence for the divine nature of Cæsar and the majesty of the empire, I refused to comply. Then the rabble made common cause with the priests, and all around the pretorium portentous cries of supplication arose. I ordered the soldiers to stack their spears in front of the tower of An-

tonia, and to proceed, armed only with sticks like lictors, to disperse the insolent crowd. But, heedless of blows, the Jews continued their entreaties, and the more obstinate amongst them threw themselves on the ground and, exposing their throats to the rods, deliberately courted death. You were a witness of my humiliation on that occasion, Lamia. By the order of Vitellius I was forced to send the insignia back to Cæsarea. That disgrace I had certainly not merited. Before the immortal gods I swear that never once during my term of office did I flout justice and the laws. But I am grown old. My enemies and detractors are dead. I shall die unavenged. Who will retrieve my character?"

He moaned and lapsed into silence. Lamia replied:

"That man is prudent who neither hopes nor fears anything from the uncertain events of the future. Does it matter in the least what estimate men may form of us hereafter? We ourselves are after all our own witnesses, and our own judges. You must rely, Pontius Pilate, on the testimony you yourself bear to your own rectitude. Be content with your own personal respect and that of your friends. For the rest, we know that mildness by itself will not suffice for the work of government. There is but little room in the actions of public men for that indulgence of human frailty which the philosophers recommend."

"We'll say no more at present," said Pontius. "The sulphurous fumes which rise from the Phlegræan plain are more powerful when the ground which exhales them

is still warm beneath the sun's rays. I must hasten on. Adieu! But now that I have rediscovered a friend, I should wish to take advantage of my good fortune. Do me the favour, Lælius Lamia, to give me your company at supper at my house to-morrow. My house stands on the seashore, at the extreme end of the town in the direction of Misenum. You will easily recognize it by the porch, which bears a painting representing Orpheus surrounded by tigers and lions, whom he is charming with the strains from his lyre.

"Till to-morrow, Lamia," he repeated, as he climbed once more into his litter. "To-morrow we will talk about Judæa."

The following day at the supper hour Lamia presented himself at the house of Pontius Pilate. Two couches only were in readiness for occupants. Creditably but simply equipped, the table held a silver service in which were set out beccaficos in honey, thrushes, oysters from the Lucrine lake, and lampreys from Sicily. As they proceeded with their repast, Pontius and Lamia interchanged inquiries with one another about their ailments, the symptoms of which they described at considerable length, mutually emulous of communicating the various remedies which had been recommended to them. Then, congratulating themselves on being thrown together once more at Baiæ, they vied with one another in praise of the beauty of that enchanting coast and the mildness of the climate they enjoyed. Lamia was enthusiastic about the charms of the courtesans who frequented the seashore laden with

golden ornaments and trailing draperies of barbaric broidery. But the aged Procurator deplored the ostentation with which by means of trumpery jewels and filmy garments foreigners and even enemies of the empire beguiled the Romans of their gold. After a time they turned to the subject of the great engineering feats that had been accomplished in the country; the prodigious bridge constructed by Caius between Puteoli and Baiæ, and the canals which Augustus excavated to convey the waters of the ocean to Lake Avernus and the Lucrine lake.

"I also," said Pontius, with a sigh, "I also wished to set afoot public works of great utility. When, for my sins, I was appointed Governor of Judæa, I conceived the idea of furnishing Jerusalem with an abundant supply of pure water by means of an aqueduct. The elevation of the levels, the proportionate capacity of the various parts, the gradiant for the brazen reservoirs to which the distribution pipes were to be fixed—I had gone into every detail, and decided everything for myself with the assistance of mechanical experts. I had drawn up regulations for the superintendents so as to prevent individuals from making unauthorized depredations. The architects and the workmen had their instructions. I gave orders for the commencement of operations. But far from viewing with satisfaction the construction of that conduit, which was intended to carry to their town upon its massive arches not only water but health, the inhabitants of Jerusalem gave vent to lamentable outcries. They gathered tumultuously together, exclaiming against the sacrilege and im-

piousness, and hurling themselves upon the workmen, scattered the very foundation stones. Can you picture to yourself, Lamia, a filthier set of barbarians? Nevertheless, Vitellius decided in their favour, and I received orders to put a stop to the work."

"It is a knotty point," said Lamia, "how far one is justified in devising things for the commonwealth against the will of the populace."

Pontius Pilate continued as though he had not heard this interruption.

"Refuse an aqueduct! What madness! But whatever is of Roman origin is distasteful to the Jews. In their eyes we are an unclean race, and our very presence appears a profanation to them. You will remember that they would never venture to enter the pretorium for fear of defiling themselves, and that I was consequently obliged to discharge my magisterial functions in an open-air tribunal on that marble pavement your feet so often trod.

"They fear us and they despise us. Yet is not Rome the mother and warden of all these peoples who nestle smiling upon her venerable bosom? With her eagles in the van, peace and liberty have been carried to the very confines of the universe. Those whom we have subdued we look on as our friends, and we leave those conquered races, nay, we secure to them the permanence of their customs and their laws. Did Syria, aforetime rent asunder by its rabble of petty kings, ever even begin to taste of peace and prosperity until it submitted to the armies of Pompey? And when Rome might have reaped a

golden harvest as the price of her goodwill, did she lay hands on the hoards that swell the treasuries of barbaric temples? Did she despoil the shrine of Cybele at Pessinus, or the Morimene and Cilician sanctuaries of Jupiter, or the temple of the Jewish god at Jerusalem? Antioch, Palmyra, and Apamea, secure despite their wealth, and no longer in dread of the wandering Arab of the desert, have erected temples to the genius of Rome and the divine Cæsar. The Jews alone hate and withstand us. They withhold their tribute till it is wrested from them, and obstinately rebel against military service."

"The Jews," replied Lamia, "are profoundly attached to their ancient customs. They suspected you, unreasonably I admit, of a desire to abolish their laws and change their usages. Do not resent it, Pontius, if I say that you did not always act in such a way as to disperse their unfortunate illusion. It gratified you, despite your habitual self-restraint, to play upon their fears, and more than once have I seen you betray in their presence the contempt with which their beliefs and religious ceremonies inspired you. You irritated them particularly by giving instructions for the sacerdotal garments and ornaments of their high priest to be kept in ward by your legionaries in the Antonine tower. One must admit that though they have never risen like us to an appreciation of things divine, the Jews celebrate rites which their very antiquity renders venerable."

Pontius Pilate shrugged his shoulders.

"They have very little exact knowledge of the nature of the gods," he said. "They worship Jupiter, yet they abstain from naming him or erecting a statue of him. They do not even adore him under the semblance of a rude stone, as certain of the Asiatic peoples are wont to do. They know nothing of Apollo, of Neptune, of Mars, nor of Pluto, nor of any goddess. At the same time, I am convinced that in days gone by they worshipped Venus. For even to this day their women bring doves to the altar as victims; and you know as well as I that the dealers who trade beneath the arcades of their temple supply those birds in couples for sacrifice. I have even been told that on one occasion some madman proceeded to overturn the stalls bearing these offerings, and their owners with them. The priests raised an outcry about it, and looked on it as a case of sacrilege. I am of opinion that their custom of sacrificing turtle-doves was instituted in honour of Venus. Why are you laughing, Lamia?"

"I was laughing," said Lamia; "at an amusing idea which, I hardly know how, just occurred to me. I was thinking that perchance some day the Jupiter of the Jews might come to Rome and vent his fury upon you. Why should he not? Asia and Africa have already enriched us with a considerable number of gods. We have seen temples in honour of Isis and the dog-faced Anubis erected in Rome. In the public squares, and even on the race-courses, you may run across the Bona Dea of the Syrians mounted on an ass. And did you never hear how, in the reign of Tiberius, a young patrician passed himself off

as the horned Jupiter of the Egyptians, Jupiter Ammon, and in this disguise procured the favours of an illustrious lady who was too virtuous to deny anything to a god? Beware, Pontius, lest the invisible Jupiter of the Jews disembark some day on the quay at Ostia!"

At the idea of a god coming out of Judæa, a fleeting smile played over the severe countenance of the Procurator. Then he replied gravely:

"How would the Jews manage to impose their sacred law on outside peoples when they are in a perpetual state of tumult amongst themselves as to the interpretation of that law? You have seen them yourself, Lamia, in the public squares, split up into twenty rival parties, with staves in their hands, abusing each other and clutching one another by the beard. You have seen them on the steps of the temple, tearing their filthy garments as a symbol of lamentation, with some wretched creature in a frenzy of prophetic exaltation in their midst. They have never realized that it is possible to discuss peacefully and with an even mind those matters concerning the divine which yet are hidden from the profane and wrapped in uncertainty. For the nature of the immortal gods remains hidden from us, and we cannot arrive at a knowledge of it. Though I am of opinion, none the less, that it is a prudent thing to believe in the providence of the gods. But the Jews are devoid of philosophy, and cannot tolerate any diversity of opinions. On the contrary, they judge worthy of the extreme penalty all those who on divine subjects profess opinions opposed to their law. And as,

since the genius of Rome has towered over them, capital sentences pronounced by their own tribunals can only be carried out with the sanction of the proconsul or the procurator, they harry the Roman magistrate at any hour to procure his signature to their baleful decrees, they besiege the pretorium with their cries of 'Death!' A hundred times, at least, have I known them, mustered, rich and poor together, all united under their priests, make a furious onslaught on my ivory chair, seizing me by the skirts of my robe, by the thongs of my sandals, and all to demand of me—nay, to exact from me—the death sentence on some unfortunate whose guilt I failed to perceive, and as to whom I could only pronounce that he was as mad as his accusers. A hundred times, do I say! Not a hundred, but every day and all day. Yet it was my duty to execute their law as if it were ours, since I was appointed by Rome not for the destruction, but for the upholding of their customs, and over them I had the power of the rod and the axe. At the outset of my term of office I endeavoured to persuade them to hear reason. I attempted to snatch their miserable victims from death. But this show of mildness only irritated them the more; they demanded their prey, fighting around me like a horde of vultures with wing and beak. Their priests reported to Cæsar that I was violating their law, and their appeals, supported by Vitellius, drew down upon me a severe reprimand. How many times did I long, as the Greeks used to say, to dispatch accusers and accused in one convoy to the crows!

"Do not imagine, Lamia, that I nourish the rancour of the discomfited, the wrath of the superannuated, against a people which in my person has prevailed against both Rome and tranquillity. But I foresee the extremity to which sooner or later they will reduce us. Since we cannot govern them, we shall be driven to destroy them. Never doubt it. Always in a state of insubordination, brewing rebellion in their inflammatory minds, they will one day burst forth upon us with a fury beside which the wrath of the Numidians and the mutterings of the Parthians are mere child's play. They are secretly nourishing preposterous hopes, and madly premeditating our ruin. How can it be otherwise, when, on the strength of an oracle, they are living in expectation of the coming of a prince of their own blood whose kingdom shall extend over the whole earth. There are no half measures with such a people. They must be exterminated. Jerusalem must be laid waste to the very foundation. Perchance, old as I am, it may be granted me to behold the day when her walls shall fall and the flames shall envelop her houses, when her inhabitants shall pass under the edge of the sword, when salt shall be strewn on the place where once the temple stood. And in that day I shall at length be justified."

Lamia exerted himself to lead the conversation back to a less acrimonious note.

"Pontius," he said, "it is not difficult for me to understand both your long-standing resentment and your sinister forebodings. Truly, what you have experienced of

the character of the Jews is nothing to their advantage. But I lived in Jerusalem as an interested onlooker, and mingled freely with the people, and I succeeded in detecting certain obscure virtues in these rude folk which were altogether hidden from you. I have met Jews who were all mildness, whose simple manners and faithfulness of heart recalled to me what our poets have related concerning the Spartan lawgiver. And you yourself, Pontius, have seen perish beneath the cudgels of your legionaries simple-minded men who have died for a cause they believed to be just without revealing their names. Such men do not deserve our contempt. I am saying this because it is desirable in all things to preserve moderation and an even mind. But I own that I never experienced any lively sympathy for the Jews. The Jewess, on the contrary, I found extremely pleasing. I was young, then, and the Syrian women stirred all my senses to response. Their ruddy lips, their liquid eyes that shone in the shade, their sleepy gaze pierced me to the very marrow. Painted and stained, smelling the nard and myrrh, steeped in odours, their physical attractions are both rare and delightful."

Pontius listened impatiently to these praises.

"I was not the kind of man to fall into the snares of the Jewish women," he said; "and since you have opened the subject yourself, Lamia, I was never able to approve of your laxity. If I did not express with sufficient emphasis formerly how culpable I held you for having intrigued at Rome with the wife of a man of consular rank, it was because you were then enduring heavy penance for

your misdoings. Marriage from the patrician point of view is a sacred tie; it is one of the institutions which are the support of Rome. As to foreign women and slaves, such relations as one may enter into with them would be of little account were it not that they habituate the body to a humiliating effeminacy. Let me tell you that you have been too liberal in your offerings to the Venus of the Market-place; and what, above all, I blame in you is that you have not married in compliance with the law and given children to the Republic, as every good citizen is bound to do."

But the man who had suffered exile under Tiberius was no longer listening to the venerable magistrate. Having tossed off his cup of Falernian, he was smiling at some image visible to his eye alone.

After a moment's silence he resumed in a very deep voice, which rose in pitch by little and little:

"With what languorous grace they dance, those Syrian women! I knew a Jewess at Jerusalem who used to dance in a poky little room, on a threadbare carpet, by the light of one smoky little lamp, waving her arms as she clanged her cymbals. Her loins arched, her head thrown back, and, as it were, dragged down by the weight of her heavy red hair, her eyes swimming with voluptuousness, eager, languishing, compliant, she would have made Cleopatra herself grow pale with envy. I was in love with her barbaric dances, her voice—a little raucous and yet so sweet—her atmosphere of incense, the semi-somnolescent state in which she seemed to live. I followed her everywhere. I

mixed with the vile rabble of soldiers, conjurers, and extortioners with which she was surrounded. One day, however, she disappeared, and I saw her no more. Long did I seek her in disreputable alleys and taverns. It was more difficult to learn to do without her than to lose the taste for Greek wine. Some months after I lost sight of her, I learned by chance that she had attached herself to a small company of men and women who were followers of a young Galilean thaumaturgist. His name was Jesus; he came from Nazareth, and he was crucified for some crime, I don't quite know what. Pontius, do you remember anything about the man?"

Pontius Pilate contracted his brows, and his hand rose to his forehead in the attitude of one who probes the deeps of memory. Then after a silence of some seconds:

"Jesus?" he murmured, "Jesus—of Nazareth? I cannot call him to mind."

A Passion in the Desert

By Honore de Balzac

"THE whole show is dreadful," she cried, coming out of the menagerie of M. Martin. She had just been looking at that daring speculator "working with his hyena"—to speak in the style of the program.

"By what means," she continued, "can he have tamed these animals to such a point as to be certain of their affection for——."

"What seems to you a problem," said I, interrupting, "is really quite natural."

"Oh!" she cried, letting an incredulous smile wander over her lips.

"You think that beasts are wholly without passions?" I asked her. "Quite the reverse; we can communicate to them all the vices arising in our own state of civilization."

She looked at me with an air of astonishment.

"Nevertheless," I continued, "the first time I saw M. Martin, I admit, like you, I did give vent to an exclamation of surprise. I found myself next to an old soldier with the right leg amputated, who had come in with me. His face had struck me. He had one of those intrepid heads, stamped with the seal of warfare, and on which the battles of Napoleon are written. Besides, he had that frank good-humored expression which always impresses me favorably. He was without doubt one of those troopers who are surprised at nothing, who find matter for

laughter in the contortions of a dying comrade, who bury or plunder him quite light-heartedly, who stand intrepidly in the way of bullets; in fact, one of those men who waste no time in deliberation, and would not hesitate to make friends with the devil himself. After looking very attentively at the proprietor of the menagerie getting out of his box, my companion pursed up his lips with an air of mockery and contempt, with that peculiar and expressive twist which superior people assume to show they are not taken in. Then when I was expatiating on the courage of M. Martin, he smiled, shook his head knowingly, and said, 'Well known.'

"How 'well known'?" I said. "If you would only explain to me the mystery I should be vastly obliged."

"After a few minutes, during which we made acquaintance, we went to dine at the first *restaurateur's* whose shop caught our eye. At dessert a bottle of champagne completely refreshed and brightened up the memories of this odd old soldier. He told me his story, and I said he had every reason to exclaim, 'Well known.'"

. . . . . .

When she got home, she teased me to that extent and made so many promises, that I consented to communicate to her the old soldier's confidences. Next day she received the following episode of an epic which one might call "The Frenchman in Egypt."

During the expedition in Upper Egypt under General Desaix, a Provençal soldier fell into the hands of the Man-

grabins, and was taken by these Arabs into the deserts beyond the falls of the Nile.

In order to place a sufficient distance between themselves and the French army, the Mangrabins made forced marches, and only rested during the night. They camped round a well overshadowed by palm trees under which they had previously concealed a store of provisions. Not surmising that the notion of flight would occur to their prisoner, they contented themselves with binding his hands, and after eating a few dates, and giving provender to their horses, went to sleep.

When the brave Provençal saw that his enemies were no longer watching him, he made use of his teeth to steal a scimitar, fixed the blade between his knees, and cut the cords which prevented using his hands; in a moment he was free. He at once seized a rifle and dagger, then taking the precaution to provide himself with a sack of dried dates, oats, and powder and shot, and to fasten a scimitar to his waist he leaped onto a horse, and spurred on vigorously in the direction where he thought to find the French army. So impatient was he to see a bivouac again that he pressed on the already tired courser at such speed that its flanks were lacerated with his spurs, and at last the poor animal died, leaving the Frenchman alone in the desert. After walking some time in the sand with all the courage of an escaped convict, the soldier was obliged to stop, as the day had already ended. In spite of the beauty of an oriental sky at night, he felt he had not strength enough to go on. Fortunately he had been able to find

a small hill, on the summit of which a few palm trees shot up into the air; it was their verdure seen from afar which had brought hope and consolation to his heart. His fatigue was so great that he lay down upon a rock of granite, capriciously cut out like a camp-bed; there he fell asleep without taking any precaution to defend himself while he slept. He had made the sacrifice of his life. His last thought was one of regret. He repented having left the Mangrabins, whose nomad life seemed to smile on him now that he was afar from them and without help. He was awakened by the sun, whose pitiless rays fell with all their force on the granite and produced an intolerable heat—for he had had the stupidity to place himself inversely to the shadow thrown by the verdant majestic heads of the palm trees. He looked at the solitary trees and shuddered—they reminded him of the graceful shafts crowned with foliage which characterize the Saracen columns in the cathedral of Arles.

But when, after counting the palm trees, he cast his eye around him, the most horrible despair was infused into his soul. Before him stretched an ocean without limit. The dark sand of the desert spread farther than sight could reach in every direction, and glittered like steel struck with a bright light. It might have been a sea of looking-glass, or lakes melted together in a mirror. A fiery vapor carried up in streaks made a perpetual whirlwind over the quivering land. The sky was lit with an oriental splendor of insupportable purity, leaving naught

for the imagination to desire. Heaven and earth were on fire.

The silence was awful in its wild and terrible majesty. Infinity, immensity, closed in upon the soul from every side. Not a cloud in the sky, not a breath in the air, not a flaw on the bosom of the sand, ever moving in diminutive waves; the horizon ended as at sea on a clear day, with one line of light, definite as the cut of a sword.

The Provençal threw his arms around the trunk of one of the palm trees, as though it were the body of a friend, and then in the shelter of the thin straight shadow that the palm cast upon the granite, he wept. Then sitting down he remained as he was, contemplating with profound sadness the implacable scene, which was all he had to look upon. He cried aloud, to measure the solitude. His voice, lost in the hollows of the hill, sounded faintly, and aroused no echo—the echo was in his own heart. The Provençal was twenty-two years old;—he loaded his carbine.

"There'll be time enough," he said to himself, laying on the ground the weapon which alone could bring him deliverance.

Looking by turns at the black expanse and the blue expanse, the soldier dreamed of France—he smelt with delight the gutters of Paris—he remembered the towns through which he had passed, the faces of his fellow-soldiers, the most minute details of his life. His southern fancy soon showed him the stones of his beloved Provence, in the play of the heat which waved over the spread sheet

of the desert. Fearing the danger of this cruel mirage, he went down the opposite side of the hill to that by which he had come up the day before. The remains of a rug showed that this place of refuge had at one time been inhabited; at a short distance he saw some palm trees full of dates. Then the instinct which binds us to life awoke again in his heart. He hoped to live long enough to await the passing of some Arabs, or perhaps he might hear the sound of cannon; for at this time Bonaparte was traversing Egypt.

This thought gave him new life. The palm tree seemed to bend with the weight of the ripe fruit. He shook some of it down. When he tasted this unhoped-for manna, he felt sure that the palms had been cultivated by a former inhabitant—the savory, fresh meat of the dates was proof of the care of his predecessor. He passed suddenly from dark despair to an almost insane joy. He went up again to the top of the hill, and spent the rest of the day in cutting down one of the sterile palm trees, which the night before had served him for shelter. A vague memory made him think of the animals of the desert; and in case they might come to drink at the spring, visible from the base of the rocks but lost farther down, he resolved to guard himself from their visits by placing a barrier at the entrance of his hermitage.

In spite of his diligence, and the strength which the fear of being devoured asleep gave him, he was unable to cut the palm in pieces, though he succeeded in cutting it down. At eventide the king of the desert fell; the sound of its

fall resounded far and wide, like a sign in the solitude; the soldier shuddered as though he had heard some voice predicting woe.

But like an heir who does not long bewail a deceased parent, he tore off from this beautiful tree the tall broad green leaves which are its poetic adornment, and used them to mend the mat on which he was to sleep.

Fatigued by the heat and his work, he fell asleep under the red curtains of his wet cave.

In the middle of the night his sleep was troubled by an extraordinary noise; he sat up, and the deep silence around him allowed him to distinguish the alternative accents of a respiration whose savage energy could not belong to a human creature.

A profound terror, increased still further by the darkness, the silence, and his waking images, froze his heart within him. He almost felt his hair stand on end, when by straining his eyes to their utmost he perceived through the shadows two faint yellow lights. At first he attributed these lights to the reflection of his own pupils, but soon the vivid brilliance of the night aided him gradually to distinguish the objects around him in the cave, and he beheld a huge animal lying but two steps from him. Was it a lion, a tiger, or a crocodile?

The Provençal was not educated enough to know under what species his enemy ought to be classed; but his fright was all the greater, as his ignorance led him to imagine all terrors at once; he endured a cruel torture, noting every variation of the breathing close to him without daring to

make the slightest movement. An odor, pungent like that of a fox, but more penetrating, profounder—so to speak—filled the cave, and when the Provençal became sensible of this, his terror reached its height, for he could not longer doubt the proximity of a terrible companion, whose royal dwelling served him for shelter.

Presently the reflection of the moon, descending on the horizon, lit up the den, rendering gradually visible and resplendent the spotted skin of a panther.

This lion of Egypt slept, curled up like a big dog, the peaceful possessor of a sumptuous niche at the gate of an hotel; its eyes opened for a moment and closed again; its face was turned toward the man. A thousand confused thoughts passed through the Frenchman's mind; first he thought of killing it with a bullet from his gun, but he saw there was not enough distance between them for him to take proper aim—the shot would miss the mark. And if it were to wake!—the thought made his limbs rigid. He listened to his own heart beating in the midst of the silence, and cursed the too violent pulsations which the flow of blood brought on, fearing to disturb that sleep which allowed him time to think of some means of escape.

Twice he placed his hand on his scimitar, intending to cut off the head of his enemy; but the difficulty of cutting the stiff, short hair compelled him to abandon this daring project. To miss would be to die for *certain,* he thought; he preferred the chances of fair fight, and made up his mind to wait till morning; the morning did not leave him long to wait.

He could now examine the panther at ease; its muzzle was smeared with blood.

"She's had a good dinner," he thought, without troubling himself as to whether her feast might have been on human flesh. "She won't be hungry when she gets up."

It was a female. The fur on her belly and flanks was glistening white; many small marks like velvet formed beautiful bracelets round her feet; her sinuous tail was also white, ending with black rings; the overpart of her dress, yellow like unburnished gold, very lissom and soft, had the characteristic blotches in the form of rosettes, which distinguish the panther from every other feline species.

This tranquil and formidable hostess snored in an attitude as graceful as that of a cat lying on a cushion. Her blood-stained paws, nervous and well-armed, were stretched out before her face, which rested upon them, and from which radiated her straight, slender whiskers, like threads of silver.

If she had been like that in a cage, the Provençal would doubtless have admired the grace of the animal, and the vigorous contrasts of vivid color which gave her robe an imperial splendor; but just then his sight was troubled by her sinister appearance.

The presence of the panther, even asleep, could not fail to produce the effect which the magnetic eyes of the serpent are said to have on the nightingale.

For a moment the courage of the soldier began to fail before this danger, though no doubt it would have risen

at the mouth of a cannon charged with shell. Nevertheless, a bold thought brought daylight to his soul and sealed up the source of the cold sweat which sprang forth on his brow. Like men driven to bay who defy death and offer their body to the smiter, so he, seeing in this merely a tragic episode, resolved to play his part with honor to the last.

"The day before yesterday the Arabs would have killed me perhaps," he said; so considering himself as good as dead already, he waited bravely, with excited curiosity, his enemy's awakening.

When the sun appeared, the panther suddenly opened her eyes; then she put out her paws with energy, as if to stretch them and get rid of cramp. At last she yawned, showing the formidable apparatus of her teeth and pointed tongue, rough as a file.

"A regular *petite maîtresse,*" thought the Frenchman, seeing her roll herself about so softly and coquettishly. She licked off the blood which stained her paws and muzzle, and scratched her head with reiterated gestures full of prettiness. "All right, make a little toilet," the Frenchman said to himself, beginning to recover his gaiety with his courage; "we'll say good morning to each other presently," and he seized the small, short dagger which he had taken from the Mangrabins. At this moment the panther turned her head toward the man and looked at him fixedly without moving.

The rigidity of her metallic eyes and their insupportable luster made him shudder, especially when the animal

walked toward him. But he looked at her caressingly, staring into her eyes in order to magnetize her, and let her come quite close to him; then with a movement both gentle and amorous, as though he were caressing the most beautiful of women, he passed his hand over her whole body, from the head to the tail, scratching the flexible vertebrae which divided the panther's yellow back. The animal waved her tail voluptuously, and her eyes grew gentle; and when for the third time the Frenchman accomplished this interesting flattery, she gave forth one of those purrings by which our cats express their pleasure; but this murmur issued from a throat so powerful and so deep, that it resounded through the cave like the last vibrations of an organ in a church. The man, understanding the importance of his caresses, redoubled them in such a way as to surprise and stupefy his imperious courtesan. When he felt sure of having extinguished the ferocity of his capricious companion, whose hunger had so fortunately been satisfied the day before, he got up to go out of the cave; the panther let him go out, but when he had reached the summit of the hill she sprang with the lightness of a sparrow hopping from twig to twig, and rubbed herself against his legs, putting up her back after the manner of all the race of cats. Then regarding her guest with eyes whose glare had softened a little, she gave vent to that wild cry which naturalists compare to the grating of a saw.

"She is exacting," said the Frenchman, smilingly.

He was bold enough to play with her ears; he caressed her belly and scratched her head as hard as he could.

When he saw that he was successful, he tickled her skull with the point of his dagger, watching for the right moment to kill her, but the hardness of her bones made him tremble for his success.

The sultana of the desert showed herself gracious to her slave; she lifted her head, stretched out her neck, and manifested her delight by the tranquillity of her attitude. It suddenly occurred to the soldier that to kill this savage princess with one blow he must poignard her in the throat.

He raised the blade, when the panther, satisfied no doubt, laid herself gracefully at his feet, and cast up at him glances in which, in spite of their natural fierceness, was mingled confusedly a kind of good-will. The poor Provençal ate his dates, leaning against one of the palm trees, and casting his eyes alternately on the desert in quest of some liberator and on his terrible companion to watch her uncertain clemency.

The panther looked at the place where the date stones fell, and every time that he threw one down her eyes expressed an incredible mistrust.

She examined the man with an almost commercial prudence. However, this examination was favorable to him, for when he had finished his meager meal she licked his boots with her powerful rough tongue, brushing off with marvellous skill the dust gathered in the creases.

"Ah, but when she's really hungry!" thought the Frenchman. In spite of the shudder this thought caused

him, the soldier began to measure curiously the proportions of the panther, certainly one of the most splendid specimens of its race. She was three feet high and four feet long without counting her tail; this powerful weapon, rounded like a cudgel, was nearly three feet long. The head, large as that of a lioness, was distinguished by a rare expression of refinement. The cold cruelty of a tiger was dominant, it was true, but there was also a vague resemblance to the face of a sensual woman. Indeed, the face of this solitary queen had something of the gaiety of a drunken Nero: she had satiated herself with blood, and she wanted to play.

The soldier tried if he might walk up and down, and the panther left him free, contenting herself with following him with her eyes, less like a faithful dog than a big Angora cat, observing everything, and every movement of her master.

When he looked around, he saw, by the spring, the remains of his horse; the panther had dragged the carcass all that way; about two-thirds of it had been devoured already. The sight reassured him.

It was easy to explain the panther's absence, and the respect she had had for him while he slept. The first piece of good luck emboldened him to tempt the future, and he conceived the wild hope of continuing on good terms with the panther during the entire day, neglecting no means of taming her, and remaining in her good graces.

He returned to her, and had the unspeakable joy of seeing her wag her tail with an almost imperceptible

movement at his approach. He sat down then, without fear, by her side, and they began to play together; he took her paws and muzzle, pulled her ears, rolled her over on her back, stroked her warm, delicate flanks. She let him do whatever he liked, and when he began to stroke the hair on her feet she drew her claws in carefully.

The man, keeping the dagger in one hand, thought to plunge it into the belly of the too-confiding panther, but he was afraid that he would be immediately strangled in her last conclusive struggle; besides, he felt in his heart a sort of remorse which bid him respect a creature that had done him no harm. He seemed to have found a friend, in a boundless desert; half unconsciously he thought of his first sweetheart, whom he had nicknamed "Mignonne" by way of contrast, because she was so atrociously jealous that all the time of their love he was in fear of the knife with which she had always threatened him.

This memory of his early days suggested to him the idea of making the young panther answer to this name, now that he began to admire with less terror her swiftness, suppleness, and softness. Toward the end of the day he had familiarized himself with his perilous position; he now almost liked the painfulness of it. At last his companion had got into the habit of looking up at him whenever he cried in a falsetto voice, "Mignonne."

At the setting of the sun Mignonne gave, several times running, a profound melancholy cry. "She's been well brought up," said the light-hearted soldier; "she says her prayers." But this mental joke only occurred to him when

he noticed what a pacific attitude his companion remained in. "Come, *ma petite blonde,* I'll let you go to bed first," he said to her, counting on the activity of his own legs to run away as quickly as possible, directly she was asleep, and seek another shelter for the night.

The soldier waited with impatience the hour of his flight, and when it had arrived he walked vigorously in the direction of the Nile; but hardly had he made a quarter of a league in the sand when he heard the panther bounding after him, crying with that saw-like cry more dreadful even than the sound of her leaping.

"Ah!" he said, "then she's taken a fancy to me; she has never met any one before, and it is really quite flattering to have her first love." That instant the man fell into one of those movable quicksands so terrible to travellers and from which it is impossible to save oneself. Feeling himself caught, he gave a shriek of alarm; the panther seized him with her teeth by the collar, and, springing vigorously backward, drew him as if by magic out of the whirling sand.

"Ah, Mignonne!' cried the soldier, caressing her enthusiastically; "we're bound together for life and death —but no jokes, mind!" and he retraced his steps.

From that time the desert seemed inhabited. It contained a being to whom the man could talk, and whose ferocity was rendered gentle by him, though he could not explain to himself the reason for their strange friendship. Great as was the soldier's desire to stay upon guard, he slept.

On awakening he could not find Mignonne; he mounted the hill, and in the distance saw her springing toward him after the habit of these animals, who cannot run on account of the extreme flexibility of the vertebral column. Mignonne arrived, her jaws covered with blood; she received the wonted caress of her companion, showing with much purring how happy it made her. Her eyes, full of languor, turned still more gently than the day before toward the Provençal, who talked to her as one would to a tame animal.

"Ah! Mademoiselle, you are a nice girl, aren't you? Just look at that! so we like to be made much of, don't we? Aren't you ashamed of yourself? So you have been eating some Arab or other, have you? that doesn't matter. They're animals just the same as you are; but don't you take to eating Frenchmen, or I shan't like you any longer."

She played like a dog with its master, letting herself be rolled over, knocked about, and stroked, alternately; sometimes she herself would provoke the soldier, putting up her paw with a soliciting gesture.

Some days passed in this manner. This companionship permitted the Provençal to appreciate the sublime beauty of the desert; now that he had a living thing to think about, alternations of fear and quiet, and plenty to eat, his mind became filled with contrast and his life began to be diversified.

Solitude revealed to him all her secrets, and enveloped him in her delights. He discovered in the rising and setting of the sun sights unknown to the world. He knew

what it was to tremble when he heard over his head the hiss of a bird's wing, so rarely did they pass, or when he saw the clouds, changing and many-colored travellers, melt one into another. He studied in the night time the effect of the moon upon the ocean of sand, where the simoom made waves swift of movement and rapid in their change. He lived the life of the Eastern day, marvelling at its wonderful pomp; then, after having revelled in the sight of a hurricane over the plain where the whirling sands made red, dry mists and death-bearing clouds, he would welcome the night with joy, for then fell the healthful freshness of the stars, and he listened to imaginary music in the skies. Then solitude taught him to unroll the treasures of dreams. He passed whole hours in remembering mere nothings, and comparing his present life with his past.

At last he grew passionately fond of the panther; for some sort of affection was a necessity.

Whether it was that his will powerfully projected had modified the character of his companion, or whether, because she found abundant food in her predatory excursions in the desert, she respected the man's life, he began to fear for it no longer, seeing her so well tamed.

He devoted the greater part of his time to sleep, but he was obliged to watch like a spider in its web that the moment of his deliverance might not escape him, if any one should pass the line marked by the horizon. He had sacrificed his shirt to make a flag with, which he hung at the top of a palm tree, whose foliage he had torn off. Taught

by necessity, he found the means of keeping it spread out, by fastening it with little sticks; for the wind might not be blowing at the moment when the passing traveller was looking through the desert.

It was during the long hours, when he had abandoned hope, that he amused himself with the panther. He had come to learn the different inflections of her voice, the expressions of her eyes; he had studied the capricious patterns of all the rosettes which marked the gold of her robe. Mignonne was not even angry when he took hold of the tuft at the end of her tail to count the rings, those graceful ornaments which glittered in the sun like jewelry. It gave him pleasure to contemplate the supple, fine outlines of her form, the whiteness of her belly, the graceful pose of her head. But it was especially when she was playing that he felt most pleasure in looking at her; the agility and youthful lightness of her movements were a continual surprise to him; he wondered at the supple way in which she jumped and climbed, washed herself and arranged her fur, crouched down and prepared to spring. However rapid her spring might be, however slippery the stone she was on, she would always stop short at the word "Mignonne."

One day, in a bright mid-day sun, an enormous bird coursed through the air. The man left his panther to look at this new guest; but after waiting a moment the deserted sultana growled deeply.

"My goodness! I do believe she's jealous," he cried, seeing her eyes become hard again; "the soul of Virginie has passed into her body; that's certain."

The eagle disappeared into the air, while the soldier admired the curved contour of the panther.

But there was such youth and grace in her form! she was beautiful as a woman! the blond fur of her robe mingled well with the delicate tints of faint white which marked her flanks.

The profuse light cast down by the sun made this living gold, these russet markings, to burn in a way to give them an indefinable attraction.

The man and the panther looked at one another with a look full of meaning; the coquette quivered when she felt her friend stroke her head; her eyes flashed like lightning —then she shut them tightly.

"She has a soul," he said, looking at the stillness of this queen of the sands, golden like them, white like them, solitary and burning like them.

. . . . . .

"Well," she said, "I have read your plea in favor of beasts; but how did two so well adapted to understand each other end?"

"Ah, well! you see, they ended as all great passions do end—by a misunderstanding. For some reason *one* suspects the other of treason; they don't come to an explanation through pride, and quarrel and part from sheer obstinacy."

"Yet sometimes at the best moments a single word or a look is enough—but anyhow go on with your story."

"It's horribly difficult, but you will understand, after what the old villain told me over his champagne.

"He said—'I don't know if I hurt her, but she turned round, as if enraged, and with her sharp teeth caught hold of my leg—gently, I daresay; but I, thinking she would devour me, plunged my dagger into her throat. She rolled over, giving a cry that froze my heart; and I saw her dying, still looking at me without anger. I would have given all the world—my cross even, which I had not got then—to have brought her to life again. It was as though I had murdered a real person; and the soldiers who had seen my flag, and were come to my assistance, found me in tears.'

"'Well sir,' he said, after a moment of silence, 'since then I have been in war in Germany, in Spain, in Russia, in France; I've certainly carried my carcass about a good deal, but never have I seen anything like the desert. Ah! yes, it is very beautiful!'

"'What did you feel there?' I asked him.

"'Oh! that can't be described, young man. Besides, I am not always regretting my palm trees and my panther. I should have to be very melancholy for that. In the desert, you see, there is everything, and nothing.'

"'Yes, but explain——'

"'Well,' he said, with an impatient gesture, 'it is God without mankind.'"

Bontje the Silent

By J. L. Perez

Translated by H. T. S.

HERE, in this world, the death of Bontje the Silent made no impression at all. Nobody could tell you who Bontje was, how he lived and what caused his death. Did his heart break, did his strength give out, or did his limbs collapse under a heavy load . . . who knows? Perhaps, after all, he starved to death!

Had a truck horse dropped dead, people would have displayed more interest, reports would have appeared in the newspapers, hundreds of curiosity seekers would have run to the spot from all sides in order to look at the carcass and to examine the location of the accident. . . .

But even the truck horse could not have received this distinction, were there as many millions of horses in this world as there are of men!

Bontje lived in silence and he died in silence; like a shadow he passed over the face of the earth.

No wine was quaffed and no glasses were clinked on the day of his circumcision. At his confirmation he made no eloquent speech, but lived throughout his days like an insignificant gray little grain of sand on

the seashore, in the midst of millions of his kind; and when the wind lifted him and caried him to the other side of the ocean, nobody noticed it.

In his lifetime the wet mud retained no trace of his footprints; after his death the wind blew down the little board over his mound; and the grave-digger's wife finding this board far from the grave, boiled a pot of potatoes over it. . . . And now, three days after Bontje's death, the grave-digger himself cannot tell you where Bontje is buried.

If Bontje had only had a tombstone, an archaeologist of a later century might perhaps have found it and the name of Bontje the Silent would have once more been heard in this world.

He was but a shadow; he left no imprint of his image in any human heart and no trace of his memory in any human mind!

No inheritance and no heirs did he leave; alone was he in life and in death alone!

Were it not for the noise of the world, some one might have heard, perhaps, how Bontje's limbs snapped under the weight of his load; were it not for the intensity of the world's toil, some one might have found time to notice how Bontje, who was human after all, walked about with eyes whose fire had been extinguished, and with cheeks that were frightfully sunken; and how, even when he had no load on his shoulders, his head was bowed to the ground, as though he were even during his lifetime already

looking for his grave! Were there as few men as truck horses in the world, some one might have asked, perhaps: "What has become of Bontje?"

When Bontje was taken to the hospital, his corner in the basement did not remain empty,—for a dozen others like him had been waiting for it, and between them they auctioned it off to the highest bidder. When he was carried from the hospital cot into the morgue, twenty poor devils were already waiting for his place. When he left the morgue, they brought in twenty men who had been killed by a collapsing wall. . . . Who knows how long he will remain peacefully in his grave? Who knows how many are already waiting for that little mound of earth?

Quietly was he born into the world, quietly he lived, quietly he died, and still more quietly was he buried.

But not so in the other world! There Bontje's death produced a great sensation!

The blast of Messiah's bugle* rang throughout the seven heavens: "Bontje the Silent is dead!" The mightiest angels, with the broadest wings, were flying about and proclaiming to each other: "Bontje has been summoned to the Great Supreme Court!! Paradise is all a-quiver with the shouting of joy: Bontje the Silent! The glory of it,—Bontje the Silent!"

Tender little seraphim, with glittering eyes and gold-spun wings, joyfully rushed to Bontje on nimble,

* Literally, ram's horn.

silver-slippered feet. The murmur of the wings, the tinkle of the slippers and the merry laughter of the fresh, rosy lips of the little angels permeated all the heavens and reached the Revered Throne, so that God also knew of the arrival of Bontje the Silent!

Father Abraham took his place at Heaven's gate, his right hand stretched forth in cordial greeting, while his old face was illumined with a bright smile of such wonderful sweetness!

And what is this rolling sound in Heaven?

It is an armchair of the purest gold which two angels have rolled into Paradise for Bontje!

And what is this flash lighting?

It is a golden crown, studded with the costliest diamonds, which they have taken in. All for Bontje!

"What? Even before the judgment of the Supreme Judge?" asked the souls of the saints, not without envy.

"Oh," answer the angels, "that will be a mere formality! Not even the Prosecuting Attorney will find anything to say against Bontje the Silent! The trial will last only five minutes."

For it is no other than Bontje the Silent himself!

* * * * *

When the little angels caught Bontje's soul in the air and played a sweet melody to him; when Father Abraham shook his hand as though he were an old comrade; when he heard that a throne was being prepared for him in Paradise, that a crown was waiting

for his head, that nothing would be said against him at the Supreme Court,—when he saw and heard all this, Bontje became dumb with terror, just as in the world below! His heart failed him. He was certain that this must be a dream, or some terrible mistake!

He was used to both! More than once had he dreamed in the world below that he was picking up money from the ground, heaps and heaps of it; and on awaking, he had found himself poorer than ever. More than once had some one smiled and spoken a kind word to him by mistake, turning away in disgust, however, as soon as the mistake was discovered. . . .

"Just my luck!" thought he.

And he stood there, his head bowed and his eyes shut, for fear that the dream would disappear and that he would awaken somewhere in a cave among lizards and snakes. He was afraid to utter a sound or to move an eyelash, lest he be recognized and hurled into purgatory.

He trembles and does not hear the compliments of the angels, nor does he see their jubilation in his honor. He makes no reply to Father Abraham's hearty greeting, and when brought before the Supreme Judge he does not even remember to say "good morning."

For Bontje is beside himself with terror.

And his terrible fear becomes still more terrible when he involuntarily beholds the floor of the Su-

preme Court under his feet. Pure alabaster and precious stones! "What a floor for my feet to stand upon!" He grows rigid with terror. "Who knows what rich man, what Rabbi, what saint they mean? . . . I can see my finish when he comes!"

In this terror he did not even hear how the Presiding Officer called out: "The case of Bontje the Silent!" Handing the documentary evidence to the Advocate the Presiding Officer continued: "Read this, but be brief!"

The entire room is whirling around with Bontje. There is a pounding in his ears; yet in the midst of this pounding he can hear more and more distinctly the tones of the Advocate that flow from his lips as sweetly as the song of a violin:

"His name fits him like a skillful tailor's gown on a graceful body."

"What is he saying?" Bontje asks himself. And he hears an impatient voice interrupting the Advocate:

"No similes, please!"

"Never in his life," proceeds the Advocate, "has he uttered a word of complaint either against God or against man! The spark of hatred has never flamed in his eyes; he has never raised them in selfish prayer to Heaven."

Again Bontje fails to understand a word, and the harsh voice interrupts once more:

"No rhetoric, please!"

"Job did not endure to the end, though less unfortunate—"

"I want facts, dry facts!" cries the President still more impatiently.

"On the eighth day he was circumcised"—

"No realism, if you please!"

"The surgeon was a quack and could not staunch the blood"—

"Go on!"

"Yet he was silent," continued the Advocate. "Even when his mother died and he got a stepmother in his thirteenth year . . . a stepmother, did I say? A snake, rather, a veritable witch. . . ."

"I wonder if they mean me, after all?" thinks Bontje.

"Pray omit insinuations against other people," rebukes the President.

"She begrudged him every morsel . . . giving him the stalest, mustiest bread, and bones for meat, while she herself drank coffee and cream—"

"Come to the point!" cries the President.

"But she did *not* begrudge him her finger nails, so that his black-and-blue body peeped through every hole of his tattered and musty clothes. . . . During the winter, in the coldest frosts, he used to chop wood for her in his bare feet, even though his hands were too small and too weak, the logs too thick and the axe too dull. . . . Many a time he sprained his hands, and

many a time he froze his feet, and yet he was silent; even before his father—"

"The drunkard!" laughed the Prosecuting Attorney, and Bontje became chilled to the very marrow.

"He never complained!" the Advocate concluded the sentence.

"And he was always alone," he continues. "No companions, no friends, and no school. . . . Never a new garment, and never a moment of freedom—"

"Give us facts!" exclaims the President once more.

"He was silent even later when his father, in a drunken fit, grabbed him by the hair and threw him out of the house at night in the midst of a blizzard! Silently he raised himself from the snow and ran off wherever his legs carried him. . . . And throughout all this he was silent. . . . Even when most hungry, he begged only with his eyes.

"Finally, in a wet and dizzy spring night he arrived at a big city. He melted into it as a drop in the ocean, and yet that very night he slept in jail. . . . But he was silent, asking not the why or wherefore of all this. He left the jail and looked for the hardest work! And yet he was silent!

"Even harder than the work itself was the finding of it,—and he was silent!

"Saturated with cold sweat, crushed together under the heaviest load, during the most painful cramps of his empty stomach, he was silent!

"Bespattered by strangers' mud, spat upon by strangers' mouths, driven with the heaviest loads from the sidewalk into the street amidst cabs and trucks and street-cars, staring death in the face at every moment, he was silent!

"He never figured out how many pounds of his burden he must carry for each penny, how many times he fell on each trip for a nickel, how many times he almost spat his very soul out in order to collect his fee; he never figured out either his own bad luck or other people's good luck. He was silent!

"He never even asked aloud for his own pay. Like a beggar he stopped at the door, and into his eyes came a dog-like prayer. 'Come later!' And like a silent shadow he disappeared in order to ask for his pay later and more silently than before!

"He was silent when they cheated him of his just dues, or paid him with a counterfeit coin . . . he was always silent!"

"Heavens, I guess they really mean me!" thinks Bontje.

* * * * *

"Once," continues the Advocate, after taking a drink of water, "a change came into his life . . . a runaway coach with rubber wheels rushed by him . . . the driver lay way back on the ground with his head split open . . . foam spurted from the mouths of the frightened horses, sparks whirled from under their hoofs as from a locomotive, and their eyes glittered like glow-

ing coals in a dark night,—and in the coach, half dead with fright, sat a man.

"Bontje stopped the runaway horses.

"The man thus saved was a man of charity, and he did not forget the debt he owed to Bontje.

"He gave him the position of his dead coachman. Bontje became a driver! And not only that, but he presented him with a wife; and not only that, but he provided him with a child! . . . And yet Bontje was still silent!"

"They mean me, they mean me!" Bontje murmurs to himself, becoming more and more strengthened in this belief. Yet he has not the courage even now to raise his eyes to the Supreme Judge.

He listens again to the Advoate:

"He was silent when his benefactor became bankrupt and failed to pay him his wages. . . . He was silent when his wife ran away and left him with a suckling babe. . . .

"He was silent fifteen years later, when this child grew up and became strong enough to throw Bontje out of the house. . . ."

"They mean me, they mean me!" Bontje says joyfully.

"And even then he was silent," resumes the Advocate more softly and sadly, "when his benefactor straightened his accounts with all others, but paid not even a cent of his past wages to Bontje . . . and even then, when he ran over him, as he was again rid-

ing in a coach with rubber wheels and horses that were as wild as lions. . . .

"He was silent all that time! He did not even tell the police who it was that crippled him so. . . .

"He was silent even in the hospital, where crying is allowed!

"He was silent even then, when the doctor refused to attend him without a fee of fifteen cents and when the attendant, without five cents, refused to change his shirt!

"He was silent in the last moments of his agony, and he was silent when death was coming upon him. . . .

"No word against God did he utter, and no word against man! . . . I am done!"

* * * * *

Bontje once more begins to tremble in every limb, for he knows that after the Advocate comes the Prosecuting Attorney. Who knows what he will say? Even Bontje himself cannot remember his entire life, having forgotten the very next moment that which happened in the previous moment. The Advocate brought it all back to him. . . . God knows what memories the Prosecuting Attorney will bring back?. . . .

"Gentlemen of the Court!" cries the Prosecuting Attorney in a piercing, bombastic voice—

But he stops short.

"Gentlemen of the Court!" he begins once more, but in a softer voice this time. Again he stops short.

Finally, out of the same throat emerges a voice as soft as butter:

"Gentlemen of the Court! He has been silent. I shall be silent, too!"

There is a quiet pause and then a new soft, trembling voice is heard:

"Bontje, my child Bontje!" These words melt in his heart like the melody of a harp-string. "My dearest child!" Bontje's heart is dissolved in tears . . . he would now gladly open his eyes, but they are blinded with tears. . . . Never yet has he wept so sweetly, so heartily. . . . "My child, my Bontje!". . . Ever since his mother died has he not heard such a voice and such words.

"My child!" continues the Highest Judge, "you have always suffered, and in silence. There is not a limb and not a bone in your entire body without a wound or a spot of blood. There is not a single hidden place in your soul that does not bleed. . . . And yet you have always been silent. . . .

"In the world below they did not understand such things. Perhaps even you yourself did not know that you could utter a cry and that this cry could shake the walls of Jericho and overthrow them! You yourself did not know of your hidden power. . . .

"In the world below they did not reward you for your silence, but *that* is the World of Delusion. Here in the World of Truth you shall receive your reward!

"Your deeds shall not be judged here, and your

worth shall not be weighed in the balance. Take whatsoever your wish! Whatever Heaven contains is yours!"

Bontje raises his eyes for the first time. He is dazed by the light on all sides. Everything is a-sparkle and a-glitter. Rays of glory flash all about him; from the walls, from the vessels, from the angels, from the judges! An infinity of suns!

He lowers his weary eyes.

"Really?" he asks skeptically and abashed.

"Most assuredly!" replies the Highest Judge. "I tell you most assuredly that it is all yours, everything in Heaven belongs to you! Choose and take whatever you wish! You take only that which is yours!"

"Really?" asks Bontje once more, but in a firmer voice this time.

"Yes, indeed, yes!" they answer him reassuringly on all sides.

"If that is the case," smiles Bontje, "I'd love to get every single day a big hot bun with fresh butter!"

Judges and angels lowered their eyes abashed, and the heavens rang with the Prosecutor's laughter.

The Birthday of the Infanta

By Oscar Wilde

IT WAS the birthday of the Infanta. She was just twelve years of age, and the sun was shining brightly in the gardens of the palace.

Although she was a real Princess and the Infanta of Spain, she had only one birthday every year, just like the children of quite poor people, so it was naturally a matter of great importance to the whole country that she should have a really fine day for the occasion. And a really fine day it certainly was. The tall striped tulips stood straight up upon their stalks, like long rows of soldiers, and looked defiantly across the grass at the roses, and said: "We are quite as splendid as you are now." The purple butterflies fluttered about with gold dust on their wings, visiting each flower in turn; the little lizards crept out of the crevices of the wall, and lay basking in the white glare; and the pomegranates split and cracked with the heat, and showed their bleeding red hearts. Even the pale yellow lemons, that hung in such profusion from the mouldering trellis and along the dim arcades, seemed to have caught a richer colour from the wonderful sunlight, and the magnolia trees opened their great globe-like blossoms of folded ivory, and filled the air with a sweet heavy perfume.

The little Princess herself walked up and down the terrace with her companions, and played at hide and seek round the stone vases and the old moss-grown statues. On ordinary days she was only allowed to play with children of her own rank, so she had always to play alone, but her birthday was an exception, and the King had given orders that she was to invite any of her young friends whom she liked to come and amuse themselves with her. There was a stately grace about these slim Spanish children as they glided about, the boys with their large-plumed hats and short fluttering cloaks, the girls holding up the trains of their long brocaded gowns, and shielding the sun from their eyes with huge fans of black and silver. But the Infanta was the most graceful of all, and the most tastefully attired, after the somewhat cumbrous fashion of the day. Her robe was of grey satin, the skirt and the wide puffed sleeves heavily embroidered with silver, and the stiff corset studded with rows of fine pearls. Two tiny slippers with big pink rosettes peeped out beneath her dress as she walked. Pink and pearl was her great gauze fan, and in her hair, which like an aureole of faded gold stood out stiffly round her pale little face, she had a beautiful white rose.

From a window in the palace the sad melancholy King watched them. Behind him stood his brother, Don Pedro of Aragon, whom he hated, and his confessor, the Grand Inquisitor of Granada, sat by his side. Sadder even than usual was the King, for as he looked at the Infanta bowing with childish gravity to the assembling courtiers, or

laughing behind her fan at the grim Duchess of Albuquerque who always accompanied her, he thought of the young Queen, her mother, who but a short time before—so it seemed to him—had come from the gay country of France, and had withered away in the sombre splendour of the Spanish court, dying just six months after the birth of her child, and before she had seen the almonds blossom twice in the orchard, or plucked the second year's fruit from the old gnarled fig-tree that stood in the centre of the now grass-grown courtyard. So great had been his love for her that he had not suffered even the grave to hide her from him. She had been embalmed by a Moorish physician, who in return for this service had been granted his life, which for heresy and suspicion of magical practices had been already forfeited, men said, to the Holy Office, and her body was still lying on its tapestried bier in the black marble chapel of the Palace, just as the monks had borne her in on that windy March day nearly twelve years before. Once every month the King, wrapped in a dark cloak and with a muffled lantern in his hand, went in and knelt by her side, calling out, *"Mi-reina! Mi-reina!"* and sometimes breaking through the formal etiquette that in Spain governs every separate action of life, and sets limits even to the sorrow of a King, he would clutch at the pale jewelled hands in a wild agony of grief, and try to wake by his mad kisses the cold painted face.

To-day he seemed to see her again, as he had seen her first at the Castle of Fontainebleau, when he was but fifteen years of age, and she still younger. They had been

formally betrothed on that occasion by the Papal Nuncio in the presence of the French King and all the Court, and he had returned to the Escurial bearing with him a little ringlet of yellow hair, and the memory of two childish lips bending down to kiss his hand as he stepped into his carriage. Later on had followed the marriage, hastily performed at Burgos, a small town on the frontier between the two countries and the grand public entry into Madrid with the customary celebration of high mass at the Church of La Atocha, and a more than usually solemn *auto-da-fé*, in which nearly three hundred heretics, amongst whom were many Englishmen, had been delivered over to the secular arm to be burned.

Certainly he had loved her madly, and to the ruin, many thought, of his country, then at war with England for the possession of the empire of the New World. He had hardly ever permitted her to be out of his sight; for her, he had forgotten, or seemed to have forgotten, all grave affairs of State; and, with that terrible blindness that passion brings upon its servants, he had failed to notice that the elaborate ceremonies by which he sought to please her did but aggravate the strange malady from which she suffered. When she died he was, for a time, like one bereft of reason. Indeed, there is no doubt but that he would have formally abdicated and retired to the great Trappist monastery at Granada, of which he was already titular Prior, had he not been afraid to leave the little Infanta at the mercy of his brother, whose cruelty, even in Spain, was notorious, and who was suspected by

many of having caused the Queen's death by means of a pair of poisoned gloves that he had presented to her on the occasion of her visiting his castle in Aragon. Even after the expiration of the three years of public mourning that he had ordained throughout his whole dominions by royal edict, he would never suffer his ministers to speak about any new alliance, and when the Emperor himself sent to him, and offered him the hand of the lovely Archduchess of Bohemia, his niece, in marriage, he bade the ambassadors tell their master that the King of Spain was already wedded to Sorrow, and that though she was but a barren bride he loved her better than Beauty; an answer that cost his crown the rich provinces of the Netherlands, which soon after, at the Emperor's instigation, revolted against him under the leadership of some fanatics of the Reformed Church.

His whole married life, with its fierce, fiery-coloured joys and the terrible agony of its sudden ending, seemed to come back to him to-day as he watched the Infanta playing on the terrace. She had all the Queen's pretty petulance of manner, the same wilful way of tossing her head, the same proud, curved beautiful mouth, the same wonderful smile—*vrai sourire de France* indeed—as she glanced up now and then at the window, or stretched out her little hand for the stately Spanish gentleman to kiss. But the shrill laughter of the children grated on his ears, and the bright, pitiless sunlight mocked his sorrow, and a dull odour of strange spices, spices such as embalmers use, seemed to taint—or was it fancy?—the clear morning air.

He buried his face in his hands, and when the Infanta looked up again the curtains had been drawn, and the King had retired.

She had made a little *moue* of disappointment, and shrugged her shoulders. Surely he might have stayed with her on her birthday. What did the stupid State-affairs matter? Or had he gone to that gloomy chapel, where the candles were always burning, and where she was never allowed to enter? How silly of him, when the sun was shining so brightly, and everybody was so happy! Besides, he would miss the sham bull-fight for which the trumpet was already sounding, to say nothing of the puppet show and the other wonderful things. Her uncle and the Grand Inquisitor were much more sensible. They had come out on the terrace, and paid her nice compliments. So she tossed her pretty head, and taking Don Pedro by the hand, she walked slowly down the steps towards a long pavilion of purple silk that had been erected at the end of the garden, the other children following in strict order of precedence, those who had the longest names going first.

A procession of noble boys, fantastically dressed as *toreadors,* came out to meet her, and the young Count of Tierra-Nueva, a wonderfully handsome lad of about fourteen years of age, uncovering his head with all the grace of a born hidalgo and grandee of Spain, led her solemnly in to a little gilt and ivory chair that was placed on a raised daïs above the arena. The children grouped them-

selves all around, fluttering their big fans and whispering to each other, and Don Pedro and the Grand Inquisitor stood laughing at the entrance. Even the Duchess—the Camerera-Mayor as she was called—a thin, hard-featured woman with a yellow ruff, did not look quite so bad-tempered as usual, and something like a chill smile flitted across her wrinkled face and twitched her thin, bloodless lips.

It certainly was a marvelous bull-fight, and much nicer, the Infanta thought, than the real bull-fight that she had been brought to see at Seville, on the occasion of the visit of the Duke of Parma to her father. Some of the boys pranced about on richly-caparisoned hobby-horses brandishing long javelins with gay streamers of bright ribands attached to them; others went on foot waving their scarlet cloaks before the bull, and vaulting lightly over the barrier when he charged them; and as for the bull himself he was just like a live bull, though he was only made of wicker-work and stretched hide, and sometimes insisted on running around the arena on his hind legs, which no live bull ever dreams of doing. He made a splendid fight of it, too, and the children got so excited that they stood up upon the benches, and waved their lace handkerchiefs and cried out: *Bravo toro! Bravo toro!* just as sensibly as if they had been grown-up people. At last, however, after a prolonged combat, during which several of the hobby-horses were gored through and through, and their riders dismounted, the young Count of Tierra-Nueva brought the bull to his knees, and having obtained permission from the

Infanta to give the *coup de grâce,* he plunged his wooden sword into the neck of the animal with such violence that the head came right off, and disclosed the laughing face of little Monsieur de Lorraine, the son of the French Ambassador at Madrid.

The arena was then cleared amidst much applause, and the dead hobby-horses dragged solemnly away by two Moorish pages in yellow and black liveries, and after a short interlude, during which a French posture-master performed upon the tight rope, some Italian puppets appeared in the semi-classical tragedy of *Sophonisba* on the stage of a small theatre that had been built up for the purpose. They acted so well, and their gestures were so extremely natural, that at the close of the play the eyes of the Infanta were quite dim with tears. Indeed some of the children really cried, and had to be comforted with sweetmeats, and the Grand Inquisitor himself was so affected that he could not help saying to Don Pedro that it seemed to him intolerable that things made simply out of wood and coloured wax, and worked mechanically by wires, should be so unhappy and meet with such terrible misfortunes.

An African juggler followed, who brought in a large flat basket covered with a red cloth, and having placed it in the centre of the arena, he took from his turban a curious reed pipe, and blew through it. In a few moments the cloth began to move, and as the pipe grew shriller and shriller two green and gold snakes put out their strange wedge-shaped heads and rose slowly up,

swaying to and fro with the music as a plant sways in the water. The children, however, were rather frightened at their spotted hoods and quick darting tongues, and were much more pleased when the juggler made a tiny orange-tree grow out of the sand and bear pretty white blossoms and clusters of real fruit; and when he took the fan of the little daughter of the Marquess de Las-Torres, and changed it into a blue bird that flew all round the pavilion and sang, their delight and amazement knew no bounds. The solemn minuet, too, performed by the dancing boys from the church of Neustra Señora Del Pilar, was charming. The Infanta had never before seen this wonderful ceremony which takes place every year at May-time in front of the high altar of the Virgin, and in her honour; and, indeed, none of the royal family of Spain had entered the great cathedral of Saragossa since a mad priest, supposed by many to have been in the pay of Elizabeth of England, had tried to administer a poisoned wafer to the Prince of the Asturias. So she had known only by hearsay of "Our Lady's Dance," as it was called, and it certainly was a beautiful sight. The boys wore old-fashioned court dresses of white velvet, and their curious three-cornered hats were fringed with silver and surmounted with huge plumes of ostrich feathers, the dazzling whiteness of their costumes, as they moved about in the sunlight, being still more accentuated by their swarthy faces and long black hair. Everybody was fascinated by the grave dignity with which they moved through the intricate figures of the dance, and by the elaborate grace of

their slow gestures, and stately bows, and when they had finished their performance and doffed their great plumed hats to the Infanta, she acknowledged their reverence with much courtesy, and made a vow that she would send a large wax candle to the shrine of Our Lady of Pilar in return for the pleasure that she had given her.

A troop of handsome Egyptians—as the gipsies were termed in those days—then advanced into the arena, and sitting down cross-legs, in a circle, began to play softly upon their zithers, moving their bodies to the tune, and humming, almost below their breath, a low, dreamy air. When they caught sight of Don Pedro they scowled at him, and some of them looked terrified, for only a few weeks before he had had two of their tribe hanged for sorcery in the marketplace at Seville, but the pretty Infanta charmed them as she leaned back peeping over her fan with her great blue eyes, and they felt sure that one so lovely as she was could never be cruel to anybody. So they played on very gently and just touching the cords of the zithers with their long pointed nails, and their heads began to nod as though they were falling asleep. Suddenly, with a cry so shrill that all the children were startled and Don Pedro's hand clutched at the agate pommel of his dagger, they leaped to their feet and whirled madly round the enclosure beating their tambourines, and chanting some wild love-song in their strange guttural language. Then at another signal they all flung themselves again to the ground and lay there quite still, the dull strumming of the zithers being the only sound that broke the

silence. After they had done this several times, they disappeared for a moment and came back leading a brown shaggy bear by a chain, and carrying on their shoulders some little Barbary apes. The bear stood upon his head with the utmost gravity, and the wizened apes played all kinds of amusing tricks with two gipsy boys who seemed to be their masters, and fought with tiny swords, and fired off guns, and went through a regular soldier's drill just like the King's own body-guard. In fact the gipsies were a great success.

But the funniest part of the whole morning's entertainment was undoubtedly the dancing of the little Dwarf. When he stumbled into the arena, waddling on his crooked legs and wagging his huge, misshapen head from side to side, the children went off into a loud shout of delight, and the Infanta herself laughed so much that the Camerera was obliged to remind her that although there were many precedents in Spain for a King's daughter weeping before her equals, there were none for a Princess of the blood royal making so merry before those who were her inferiors in birth. The Dwarf, however, was really quite irresistible, and even at the Spanish Court, always noted for its cultivated passion for the horrible, so fantastic a little monster had never been seen. It was his first appearance, too. He had been discovered only the day before, running wild through the forest, by two of the nobles who happened to have been hunting in a remote part of the great cork-wood that surrounded the town, and had been carried off by them to the Palace as a sur-

prise for the Infanta; his father, who was a poor charcoal-burner, being but too well pleased to get rid of so ugly and useless a child. Perhaps the most amusing thing about him was his complete unconsciousness of his own grotesque appearance. Indeed, he seemed quite happy and full of the highest spirits. When the children laughed, he laughed as freely and as joyously as any of them, and at the close of each dance he made them each the funniest of bows, smiling and nodding at them just as if he was really one of themselves, and not a little misshapen thing that Nature, in some humorous mood, had fashioned for others to mock at. As for the Infanta, she absolutely fascinated him. He could not keep his eyes off her, and seemed to dance for her alone, and when at the close of the performance, remembering how she had seen the great ladies of the Court throw bouquets to Caffarelli the famous Italian treble, whom the Pope had sent from his own chapel to Madrid that he might cure the King's melancholy by the sweetness of his voice, she took out of her hair the beautiful white rose, and partly for a jest and partly to tease the Camerera, threw it to him across the arena with her sweetest smile; he took the whole matter quite seriously, and pressing the flower to his rough, coarse lips he put his hand upon his heart, and sank on one knee before her, grinning from ear to ear, and with his little bright eyes sparkling with pleasure.

This so upset the gravity of the Infanta that she kept on laughing long after the little Dwarf had run out of the arena, and expressed a desire to her uncle that the

dance should be immediately repeated. The Camerera, however, on the plea that the sun was too hot, decided that it would be better that her Highness should return without delay to the Palace, where a wonderful feast had been already prepared for her, including a real birthday cake with her own initials worked all over it in painted sugar and a lovely silver flag waving from the top. The Infanta accordingly rose up with much dignity, and having given orders that the little Dwarf was to dance again for her after the hour of siesta, and conveyed her thanks to the young Count of Tierra-Nueva for his charming reception, she went back to her apartments, the children following in the same order in which they had entered.

Now when the little Dwarf heard that he was to dance a second time before the Infanta, and by her own express command, he was so proud that he ran out into the garden, kissing the white rose in an absurd ecstasy of pleasure, and making the most uncouth and clumsy gestures of delight.

The Flowers were quite indignant at his daring to intrude into their beautiful home, and when they saw him capering up and down the walks, and waving his arms above his head in such a ridiculous manner, they could not restrain their feelings any longer.

"He is really far too ugly to be allowed to play in any place where we are," cried the Tulips.

"He should drink poppy-juice, and go to sleep for a thousand years," said the great scarlet Lilies, and they grew quite hot and angry.

"He is a perfect horror!" screamed the Cactus. "Why he is twisted and stumpy, and his head is completely out of proportion with his legs. Really he makes me feel prickly all over, and if he comes near me I will sting him with my thorns."

"And he has actually got one of my best blooms!" exclaimed the White Rose-Tree. "I gave it to the Infanta this morning myself, as a birthday present, and he has stolen it from her." And she called out: "Thief, thief, thief!" at the top of her voice.

Even the red Geraniums, who did not usually give themselves airs, and were known to have a great many poor relations themselves, curled up in disgust when they saw him, and when the Violets meekly remarked that though he was certainly extremely plain, still he could not help it, they retorted with a good deal of justice that that was his chief defect, and that there was no reason why one should admire a person because he was incurable; and, indeed, some of the Violets themselves felt that the ugliness of the little Dwarf was almost ostentatious, and that he would have shown much better taste if he had looked sad, or at least pensive, instead of jumping about merrily, and throwing himself into such grotesque and silly attitudes.

As for the old Sundial, who was an extremely remarkable individual, and had once told the time of day to no less a person than the Emperor Charles V. himself, he

was so taken aback by the little Dwarf's appearance, that he almost forgot to mark two whole minutes with his long shadowy finger, and could not help saying to the great milk-white Peacock, who was sunning herself on the balustrade, that everyone knew that the children of Kings were Kings, and that the children of charcoal-burners were charcoal-burners, and that it was absurd to pretend that it wasn't so; a statement with which the Peacock entirely agreed, and indeed screamed out, "Certainly, certainly," in such a loud, harsh voice, that the gold-fish who lived in the basin of the cool splashing fountain put their heads out of the water and asked the huge stone Tritons what on earth was the matter.

But somehow the Birds liked him. They had seen him often in the forest, dancing about like an elf after the eddying leaves, or crouched up in the hollow of some old oak-tree, sharing his nuts with the squirrels. They did not mind his being ugly, a bit. Why, even the nightingale herself, who sang so sweetly in the orange groves at night that sometimes the Moon leaned down to listen, was not much to look at after all; and, besides, he had been kind to them, and during that terribly bitter winter, when there were no berries on the trees, and the ground was as hard as iron, and the wolves had come down to the very gates of the city to look for food, he had never forgotten them, but had always given them crumbs out of his little hunch of black bread, and divided with them whatever poor breakfast he had.

So they flew round and round him, just touching his cheek with their wings as they passed, and chattered to each other, and the little Dwarf was so pleased that he could not help showing them the beautiful white rose, and telling them that the Infanta herself had given it to him because she loved him.

They did not understand a single word of what he was saying, but that made no matter, for they put their heads on one side, and looked wise, which is quite as good as understanding a thing, and very much easier.

The Lizards also took an immense fancy to him, and when he grew tired of running about and flung himself down on the grass to rest, they played and romped all over him, and tried to amuse him in the best way they could. "Every one cannot be as beautiful as a lizard," they cried; "that would be too much to expect. And, though it sounds absurd to say so, he is really not so ugly after all, provided, of course, that one shuts one's eyes, and does not look at him." The Lizards were extremely philosophical by nature, and often sat thinking for hours and hours together, when there was nothing else to do, or when the weather was too rainy for them to go out.

The flowers, however, were excessively annoyed at their behaviour, and at the behaviour of the birds. "It only shows," they said, "what a vulgarising effect this incessant rushing and flying about has. Well-bred people always stay exactly in the same place, as we do. No one ever saw us hopping up and down the walks, or galloping madly

through the grass after dragonflies. When we do want change of air, we send for the gardener, and he carries us to another bed. This is dignified, and as it should be. But birds and lizards have no sense of repose, and, indeed, birds have not even a permanent address. They are mere vagrants like the gipsies, and should be treated in exactly the same manner." So they put their noses in the air, and looked very haughty, and were quite delighted when after some time they saw the little Dwarf scramble up from the grass, and make his way across the terrace to the palace.

"He should certainly be kept indoors for the rest of his natural life," they said. "Look at his hunched back, and his crooked legs," and they began to titter.

But the little Dwarf knew nothing of all this. He liked the birds and the lizards immensely, and thought that the flowers were the most marvellous things in the whole world, except, of course, the Infanta, but then she had given him the beautiful white rose, and she loved him, and that made a great difference. How he wished that he had gone back with her! She would have put him on her right hand, and smiled at him, and he would have never left her side, but would have made her his playmate, and taught her all kinds of delightful tricks. For though he had never been in a palace before, he knew a great many wonderful things. He could make little cages out of rushes for the grasshoppers to sing in, and fashion the long-jointed bamboo into the pipe that Pan loves to hear. He knew the cry of every bird, and could call the starlings

from the tree-top, or the heron from the mere. He knew the trail of every animal, and could track the hare by its delicate footprints, and the boar by the trampled leaves. All the wind-dances he knew, the mad dance in red raiment with the autumn, the light dance in blue sandals over the corn, the dance with white snow-wreaths in winter, and the blossom-dance through the orchards in spring. He knew where the wood-pigeons built their nests, and once when a fowler had snared the parent birds, he had brought up the young ones himself, and had built a little dovecot for them in the cleft of a pollard elm. They were quite tame, and used to feed out of his hands every morning. She would like them, and the rabbits that scurried about in the long fern, and the jays with their steely feathers and black bills, and the hedgehogs that could curl themselves up into prickly balls, and the great wise tortoises that crawled slowly about, shaking their heads and nibbling at the young leaves. Yes, she must certainly come to the forest and play with him. He would give her his own little bed, and would watch outside the window till dawn, to see that the wild horned cattle did not harm her, nor the gaunt wolves creep too near the hut. And at dawn he would tap at the shutters and wake her, and they would go out and dance together all the day long. It was really not a bit lonely in the forest. Sometimes a Bishop rode through on his white mule, reading out of a painted book. Sometimes in their green velvet caps, and their jerkins of tanned deerskin, the falconers passed by, with hooded hawks on their wrists. At vintage time came the

grape-treaders, with purple hands and feet, wreathed with glossy ivy and carrying dripping skins of wine; and the charcoal-burners sat round their huge braziers at night, watching the dry logs charring slowly in the fire, and roasting chestnuts in the ashes, and the robbers came out of their caves and made merry with them. Once, too, he had seen a beautiful procession winding up the long dusty road to Toledo. The monks went in front singing sweetly, and carrying bright banners and crosses of gold, and then, in silver armour, with match-locks and pikes came the soldiers, and in their midst walked three barefooted men, in strange yellow dresses painted all over with wonderful figures, and carrying lighted candles in their hands. Certainly there was a great deal to look at in the forest, and when she was tired he would find a soft bank of moss for her, or carry her in his arms, for he was very strong, though he knew that he was not tall. He would make her a necklace of red bryony berries, that would be quite as pretty as the white berries that she wore on her dress, and when she was tired of them, she could throw them away, and he would find her others. He would bring her acorn-cups and dew-drenched anemones, and tiny glow-worms to be stars in the pale gold of her hair.

But where was she? He asked the white rose, and it made him no answer. The whole place seemed asleep, and even where the shutters had not been closed, heavy curtains had been drawn across the windows to keep out the glare. He wandered all round looking for some place through which he might gain an entrance, and at last he

caught sight of a little private door that was lying open. He slipped through, and found himself in a splendid hall, far more splendid, he feared, than the forest, there was so much gilding everywhere, and even the floor was made of great coloured stones, fitted together into a sort of geometrical pattern. But the little Infanta was not there, only some wonderful white statues that looked down on him from their jasper pedestals, with sad blank eyes and strangely smiling lips.

At the end of the hall hung a richly embroidered curtain of black velvet, powdered with suns and stars, the King's favourite devices, and broidered on the colour he loved best. Perhaps she was hiding behind that? He would try at any rate.

So he stole quietly across, and drew it aside. No; there was only another room, though a prettier room, he thought, than the one he had just left. The walls were hung with a many-figured green arras of needle-wrought tapestry representing a hunt, the work of some Flemish artists who had spent more than seven years in its composition. It had once been the chamber of *Jean le Fou,* as he was called, that mad King who was so enamoured of the chase, that he had often tried in his delirium to mount the huge rearing horses, and to drag down the stag on which the great hounds were leaping, sounding his hunting horn, and stabbing with his dagger at the pale flying deer. It was now used as the council-room, and on the centre table were lying the red portfolios of the ministers, stamped with the

gold tulips of Spain, and with the arms and emblems of the house of Hapsburg.

The little Dwarf looked in wonder all round him, and was half-afraid to go on. The strange silent horsemen that galloped so swiftly through the long glades without making any noise, seemed to him like those terrible phantoms of whom he had heard the charcoal-burners speaking —the Comprachos, who hunt only at night, and if they meet a man, turn him into a hind, and chase him. But he thought of the pretty Infanta, and took courage. He wanted to find her alone, and to tell her that he, too, loved her. Perhaps she was in the room beyond.

He ran across the soft Moorish carpets, and opened the door. No! She was not here either. The room was quite empty.

It was a throne-room, used for the reception of foreign ambassadors, when the King, which of late had not been often, consented to give them a personal audience; the same room in which, many years before, envoys had appeared from England to make arrangements for the marriage of their Queen, then one of the Catholic sovereigns of Europe, with the Emperor's eldest son. The hangings were of gilt Cordovan leather, and a heavy gilt chandelier with branches for three hundred wax lights hung down from the black and white ceiling. Underneath a great canopy of gold cloth, on which the lions and towers of Castile were broidered in seed pearls, stood the throne itself, covered with a rich pall of black velvet studded with silver tulips and elaborately fringed with silver and

pearls. On the second step of the throne was placed the kneeling-stool of the Infanta, with its cushion of cloth of silver tissue, and below that again, and beyond the limit of the canopy, stood the chair for the Papal Nuncio, who alone had the right to be seated in the King's presence on the occasion of any public ceremonial, and whose Cardinal's hat, with its tangled scarlet tassels, lay on a purple *tabouret* in front. On the wall, facing the throne, hung a life-sized portrait of Charles V. in hunting dress, with a great mastiff by his side, and a picture of Philip II receiving the homage of the Netherlands occupied the centre of the other wall. Between the windows stood a black ebony cabinet, inlaid with plates of ivory, on which the figures from Holbein's Dance of Death had been graved—by the hand, some said, of that famous master himself.

But the little Dwarf cared nothing for all this magnificence. He would not have given his rose for all the pearls on the canopy, nor one white petal of his rose for the throne itself. What he wanted was to see the Infanta before she went down to the pavilion, and to ask her to come away with him when he had finished his dance. Here, in the Palace, the air was close and heavy, but in the forest the wind blew free, and the sunlight with wandering hands of gold moved the tremulous leaves aside. There were flowers, too, in the forest, not so splendid, perhaps, as the flowers in the garden, but more sweetly scented for all that; hyacinths in early spring that flooded with waving purple the cool glens, and grassy knolls; yellow prim-

roses that nestled in little clumps round the gnarled roots of the oak-trees; bright celandine, and blue speedwell, and irises lilac and gold. There were grey catkins on the hazels, and the fox-gloves drooped with the weight of their dappled bee-haunted cells. The chestnut had its spires of white stars, and the hawthorn its pallid moons of beauty. Yes: surely she would come if he could only find her! She would come with him to the fair forest, and all day long he would dance for her delight. A smile lit up his eyes at the thought, and he passed into the next room.

Of all the rooms this was the brightest and the most beautiful. The walls were covered with a pink-flowered Lucca damask, patterned with birds and dotted with dainty blossoms of silver; the furniture was of massive silver, festooned with florid wreaths, and swinging Cupids; in front of the two large fire-places stood great screens broidered with parrots and peacocks, and the floor, which was of sea-green onyx, seemed to stretch far away into the distance. Nor was he alone. Standing under the shadow of the doorway, at the extreme end of the room, he saw a little figure watching him. His heart trembled, a cry of joy broke from his lips, and he moved out into the sunlight. As he did so, the figure moved out also, and he saw it plainly.

The Infanta! It was a monster, the most grotesque monster he had ever beheld. Not properly shaped, as all other people were, but hunchbacked, and crooked-limbed, with huge lolling head and mane of black hair. The little

Dwarf frowned, and the monster frowned also. He laughed, and it laughed with him, and held its hands to its sides, just as he himself was doing. He made it a mocking bow, and it returned him a low reverence. He went towards it, and it came to meet him, copying each step that he made, and stopping when he stopped himself. He shouted with amusement, and ran forward, and reached out his hand, and the hand of the monster touched his, and it was as cold as ice. He grew afraid, and moved his hand across, and the monster's hand followed it quickly. He tried to press on, but something smooth and hard stopped him. The face of the monster was now close to his own, and seemed full of terror. He brushed his hair off his eyes. It imitated him. He struck at it, and it returned blow for blow. He loathed it, and it made hideous faces at him. He drew back, and it retreated.

What is it? He thought for a moment, and looked round at the rest of the room. It was strange, but everything seemed to have its double in this invisible wall of clear water. Yes, picture for picture was repeated, and couch for couch. The sleeping Faun that lay in the alcove by the doorway had its twin brother that slumbered, and the silver Venus that stood in the sunlight held out her arms to a Venus as lovely as herself.

Was it Echo? He had called to her once in the valley, and she had answered him word for word. Could she mock the eye, as she mocked the voice? Could she make a mimic world just like the real world? Could the shadows

of things have colour and life and movement? Could it be that—?

He started, and taking from his breast the beautiful white rose, he turned round, and kissed it. The monster had a rose of its own, petal for petal the same! It kissed it with like kisses, and pressed it to its heart with horrible gestures.

When the truth dawned upon him, he gave a wild cry of despair, and fell sobbing to the ground. So it was he who was misshapen and hunchbacked, foul to look at and grotesque. He himself was the monster, and it was at him that all the children had been laughing, and the little Princess who he thought loved him—she, too, had been merely mocking at his ugliness, and making merry over his twisted limbs. Why had they not left him in the forest, where there was no mirror to tell him how loathsome he was? Why had his father not killed him, rather than sell him to his shame? The hot tears poured down his cheeks, and he tore the white rose to pieces. The sprawling monster did the same, and scattered the faint petals in the air. It grovelled on the ground, and, when he looked at it, it watched him with a face drawn with pain. He crept away, lest he should see it, and covered his eyes with his hands. He crawled, like some wounded thing, into the shadow, and lay there moaning.

And at that moment the Infanta herself came in with her companions through the open window and, when they saw the ugly little dwarf lying on the ground and beating the floor with his clenched hands, in the most fantastic

and exaggerated manner, they went off into shouts of happy laughter, and stood all round him and watched him.

"His dancing was funny," said the Infanta; "but his acting is funnier still. Indeed he is almost as good as the puppets, only, of course, not quite so natural." And she fluttered her big fan, and applauded.

But the little Dwarf never looked up, and his sobs grew fainter and fainter, and suddenly he gave a curious gasp, and clutched his side. And then he fell back again, and lay quite still.

"That is capital," said the Infanta, after a pause; "but now you must dance for me."

"Yes," cried all the children, "you must get up and dance, for you are as clever as the Barbary apes, and much more ridiculous."

But the little Dwarf made no answer.

And the Infanta stamped her foot, and called out to her uncle, who was walking on the terrace with the Chamberlain, reading some despatches that had just arrived from Mexico where the Holy Office had recently been established. "My funny little dwarf is sulking," she cried, "you must wake him up, and tell him to dance for me."

They smiled at each other, and sauntered in, and Don Pedro stooped down, and slapped the Dwarf on the cheek with his embroidered glove. "You must dance," he said, "*petit monstre*. You must dance. The Infanta of Spain and the Indies wishes to be amused."

But the little Dwarf never moved.

"A whipping master should be sent for," said Don Pedro wearily, and he went back to the terrace. But the Chamberlain looked grave, and he knelt beside the little dwarf, and put his hand upon his heart. And after a few moments he shrugged his shoulders, and rose up, and having made a low bow to the Infanta, he said:

"*Mi bella Princesa,* your funny little dwarf will never dance again. It is a pity, for he is so ugly that he might have made the King smile."

"But why will he not dance again?" asked the Infanta, laughing.

"Because his heart is broken," answered the Chamberlain.

And the Infanta frowned, and her dainty rose-leaf lips curled in pretty disdain. "For the future let those who come to play with me have no hearts," she cried, and she ran out into the garden.

The Lost Words of Love

(Les Mots Perdus)

By Catulle Mendès

Translated by Thomas Seltzer

Copyright, 1905, by The Current Literature Publishing Co.

I

ONCE upon a time a very cruel fairy, pretty as the flowers, but wicked as the serpents who hide in the grass ready to spring upon you, resolved to avenge herself upon all the people of a great country. Where was this country? On the mountain or in the plain, at the shore of the river or by the sea? This the story does not tell. Perhaps it was near the kingdom where the dressmakers were very skilful in adorning princesses' robes with moons and with stars. And what the offence under which the fairy smarted? On this point also the story is silent. Perhaps they had omitted to offer up prayers to her at the baptism of the king's daughter. Be this as it may, it is certain that the fairy was in a great rage.

At first she asked herself whether she should devastate the country by sending out the thousands of spirits that served her to set fire to all the palaces and all the cottages; or whether she should cause all the

lilacs and all the roses to fade; or whether she should turn all the young girls into ugly old women. She could have let loose all the four winds in the streets and laid low all the houses and trees. At her command fire-spitting mountains would have buried the entire land under a mass of burning lava, and the sun would have turned from his path so as not to shine upon the accursed city. But she did still worse. Like a thief leisurely choosing the most precious jewels in a case, she removed from the memory of men and woman the three divine words.

"I love you."

And having wrought this affliction, she removed herself with a smile that would have been more hideous than the church of the devil had she not had the most beautiful rosy lips in all creation.

II

At first the men and women only half perceived the wrong that had been done them. They felt they lacked something, but did not know what. The sweethearts who met in the eglantine lanes, the married couples who talk confidingly to each other behind closed windows and drawn curtains, suddenly interrupted themselves and looked at each other or embraced. They felt, indeed, the desire to utter a certain customary phrase, but they had no idea even of what that phrase was. They were astonished, uneasy, but they asked no question, for they knew not what ques-

tion to ask, so complete was their forgetfulness of the precious word. As yet, however, their suffering was not very great. They had so many other words they could whisper to each other, so many forms of endearment.

Alas! It was not long before they were seized with a profound melancholy. In vain did they adore each other, in vain did they call each other by the tenderest names and speak the sweetest language. It was not enough to declare that all the bliss lay in their kisses; to swear that they were ready to die, he for her and she for him; to call each other: "My soul; My flame! My dream!!" They instinctively felt the need of saying and hearing another word, more exquisite than all other words; and with the bitter memory of the ecstasy contained in this word came the anguish of never again being able to utter or to hear it.

Quarrels followed in the wake of this distress. Judging his happiness incomplete on account of the avowal that was henceforth denied to the most ardent lips, the lover demanded from her and she from him the very thing that neither the one nor the other could give, without either knowing what that thing was, nor being able to name it. They accused each other of coldness, of perfidy, not believing in the tenderness which was not expressed as they desired it should be.

Thus the sweethearts soon ceased to have their rendezvous in the lanes where the eglantines grew, and even after the windows were closed the conjugal

chambers echoed only with dry conversations from easy-chairs that were never drawn close to each other. Can there be joy without love? If the country which had incurred the hatred of the fairy had been ruined by war, or devastated by pestilence, it could not have been as desolute, as mournful, as forlorn as it had become on account of the three forgotten words.

III

There lived in this country a poet whose plight was even more pitiful than the plight of all the rest. It was not that having a beautiful sweetheart he was in despair at not being able to say and to hear the stolen word. He had no sweetheart. He was too much in love with the muse. It was because he was unable to finish a poem he had begun the day before the wicked fairy had accomplished her vengeance. And why? Because it just happened that the poem was to wind up with "I love you!" and it was impossible to end it in any other way.

The poet struck his brow, took his head between his hands, and asked himself: "Have I gone mad?" He was certain he had found the words that were to precede the last point of exclamation before he had commenced to write the stanza. The proof that he had found them was that the rhyme with which it was to go was already written. There it was—it waited for them, nay, called aloud for them; it wanted no others, waiting for them like lips waiting for sister

lips to kiss them. And this indispensable, fatal phrase he had forgotten; he could not even recall that he had ever known it. Surely there was some mystery in this, the poet mused unceasingly and with bitter melancholy—oh, the pang of interrupted poems!—as he sat at the edge of the forest near the limpid fountains where the fairies are wont to dance of an evening by starlight.

IV

Now as he sat one morning under the branches of a tree, the wicked, thieving fairy saw him and loved him. One is not a fairy for nothing; a fairy does not stand on ceremony. Swifter than a butterfly kisses a rose she put her lips on his lips, and the poet, greatly preoccupied though he was with his ode, could not help but feel the heavenliness of her caress. Blue and rose diamond grottos opened up in the depths of the earth, luminous as the stars. Thither the poet and the fairy were drawn in a chariot of gold by winged steeds who left the earth in their flight. And for a long, long time they loved each other, forgetful of all but their kisses and smiles. If they ceased for a moment to have their mouths united and to look into each other's eyes, it was but to take pleasure in more amiable diversions. Gnomes dressed in violet satin, elves attired in a misty haze, performed dances before them that fell in rhythm with the music of unseen orchestras, while flitting hands that had no arms brought them

ruby baskets of snow-white fruit, perfumed like a white rose and like a virgin bosom. Or, to please the fairy more, the poet recited, while striking the chords of a *theorbo,* the most beautiful verses his fancy could conceive.

Fairy that she was, she had never known joy comparable to this of being sung by a beautiful young man who invented new songs every day. And when he grew silent, and she felt the breath of his mouth near her, felt it passing through her hair, she melted away in tenderness.

Their happiness seemed without end. Days passed by, many, many days, but nothing occurred to disturb their joy. And yet she had moments of gloom, when she would sit musing, with her cheek on her hand and her hair falling in streams down to her hips.

"O queen!" he cried, "what is it that makes you sad; what more can you desire, seeing that we are so happy in the midst of all our pleasures, you who are all powerful, you who are so beautiful?"

At first she made no answer, but when he insisted, she sighed and said: "Alas! one always ends by suffering the evil that one has inflicted on others. Alas! I am sad because you have never told me: 'I love you'."

He did not pronounce the words, but uttered a cry of joy at having found again the end of his poem. In vain the fairy attempted to retain him in the blue and rose-diamond grottos, in the gardens of lilies that

were as luminous as the stars. He returned to earth, completed, wrote and published his ode, in which the men and women of the afflicted country found again the divine words they had lost.

Now there were rendezvous again in the lanes, and warm, amorous conversations at the conjugal windows.

It is because of poetry that kisses are sweet, and lovers say nothing that the poets have not sung.

I'm a Fool

By Sherwood Anderson

IT WAS a hard jolt for me, one of the most bitterest I ever had to face. And it all came about through my own foolishness, too. Even yet sometimes, when I think of it, I want to cry or swear or kick myself. Perhaps, even now, after all this time, there will be a kind of satisfaction in making myself look cheap by telling of it.

It began at three o'clock one October afternoon as I sat in the grand stand at the fall trotting and pacing meet at Sandusky, Ohio.

To tell the truth, I felt a little foolish that I should be sitting in the grand stand at all. During the summer before I had left my home town with Harry Whitehead and, with a nigger named Burt, had taken a job as swipe with one of the two horses Harry was campaigning through the fall race meets that year. Mother cried and my sister Mildred, who wanted to get a job as a school teacher in our town that fall, stormed and scolded about the house all during the week before I left. They both thought it something disgraceful that one of our family should take a place as a swipe with race horses. I've an idea Mildred thought my taking the place would stand in the way of her getting the job she'd been working so long for.

But after all I had to work, and there was no other work to be got. A big lumbering fellow of nineteen

couldn't just hang around the house and I had got too big to mow people's lawns and sell newspapers. Little chaps who could get next to people's sympathies by their sizes were always getting jobs away from me. There was one fellow who kept saying to everyone who wanted a lawn mowed or a cistern cleaned, that he was saving money to work his way through college, and I used to lay awake nights thinking up ways to injure him without being found out. I kept thinking of wagons running over him and bricks falling on his head as he walked along the street. But never mind him.

I got the place with Harry and I liked Burt fine. We got along splendid together. He was a big nigger with a lazy sprawling body and soft, kind eyes, and when it came to a fight he could hit like Jack Johnson. He had Bucephalus, a big black pacing stallion that could do 2.09 or 2.10, if he had to, and I had a little gelding named Doctor Fritz that never lost a race all fall when Harry wanted him to win.

We set out from home late in July in a box car with the two horses and after that, until late November, we kept moving along to the race meets and the fairs. It was a peachey time for me, I'll say that. Sometimes now I think that boys who are raised regular in houses, and never have a fine nigger like Burt for best friend, and go to high schools and college, and never steal anything, or get drunk a little, or learn to swear from fellows who know how, or come walking up in front of a grand stand in their shirt sleeves and with dirty horsey pants on when

the races are going on and the grand stand is full of people all dressed up—What's the use of talking about it? Such fellows don't know nothing at all. They've never had no opportunity.

But I did. Burt taught me how to rub down a horse and put the bandages on after a race and steam a horse out and a lot of valuable things for any man to know. He could wrap a bandage on a horse's leg so smooth that if it had been the same color you would think it was his skin, and I guess he'd have been a big driver, too, and got to the top like Murphy and Walter Cox and the others if he hadn't been black.

Gee whizz, it was fun. You got to a county seat town, maybe say on a Saturday or Sunday, and the fair began the next Tuesday and lasted until Friday afternoon. Doctor Fritz would be, say in the 2.25 trot on Tuesday afternoon and on Thursday afternoon Bucephalus would knock 'em cold in the "free-for-all" pace. It left you a lot of time to hang around and listen to horse talk, and see Burt knock some yap cold that got too gay, and you'd find out about horses and men and pick up a lot of stuff you could use all the rest of your life, if you had some sense and salted down what you heard and felt and saw.

And then at the end of the week when the race meet was over, and Harry had run home to tend up to his livery stable business, you and Burt hitched the two horses to carts and drove slow and steady across country, to the place for the next meeting, so as to not overheat the horses, etc., etc., you know.

Gee whizz, Gosh amighty, the nice hickorynut and beechnut and oaks and other kinds of trees along the roads, all brown and red, and the good smells, and Burt singing a song that was called Deep River, and the country girls at the windows of houses and everything. You can stick your colleges up your nose for all me. I guess I know where I got my education.

Why, one of those little burgs of towns you come to on the way, say now on a Saturday afternoon, and Burt says, "let's lay up here." And you did.

And you took the horses to a livery stable and fed them, and you got your good clothes out of a box and put them on.

And the town was full of farmers gaping, because they could see you were race horse people, and the kids maybe never see a nigger before and was afraid and run away when the two of us walked down their main street.

And that was before prohibition and all that foolishness, and so you went into a saloon, the two of you, and all the yaps come and stood around, and there was always someone pretended he was horsey and knew things and spoke up and began asking questions, and all you did was to lie and lie all you could about what horses you had, and I said I owned them, and then some fellow said, "will you have a drink of whiskey" and Burt knocked his eye out the way he could say, off-hand like, "Oh well, all right, I'm agreeable to a little nip. I'll split a quart with you." Gee whizz.

But that isn't what I want to tell my story about. We got home late in November and I promised mother I'd quit the race horses for good. There's a lot of things you've got to promise a mother because she don't know any better.

And so, there not being any work in our town any more than when I left there to go to the races, I went off to Sandusky and got a pretty good place taking care of horses for a man who owned a teaming and delivery and storage and coal and real estate business there. It was a pretty good place with good eats, and a day off each week, and sleeping on a cot in a big barn, and mostly just shovelling in hay and oats to a lot of big good-enough skates of horses, that couldn't have trotted a race with a toad. I wasn't dissatisfied and I could send money home.

And then, as I started to tell you, the fall races come to Sandusky and I got the day off and I went . I left the job at noon and had on my good clothes and my new brown derby hat, I'd just bought the Saturday before, and a stand-up collar.

First of all I went down-town and walked about with the dudes. I've always thought to myself, "put up a good front" and so I did it. I had forty dollars in my pocket and so I went into the West House, a big hotel, and walked up to the cigar stand. "Give me three twenty-five cent cigars," I said. There was a lot of horsemen and strangers and dressed-up people from other towns standing around in the lobby and in the bar, and I mingled amongst them. In the bar there was a fellow with a cane

and a Windsor tie on, that it made me sick to look at him. I like a man to be a man and dress up, but not to go put on that kind of airs. So I pushed him aside, kind of rough, and had me a drink of whiskey. And then he looked at me, as though he thought maybe he'd get gay, but he changed his mind and didn't say anything. And then I had another drink of whiskey, just to show him something, and went out and had a hack out to the races, all to myself, and when I got there I bought myself the best seat I could get up in the grand stand, but didn't go in for any of these boxes. That's putting on too many airs.

And so there I was, sitting up in the grand stand as gay as you please and looking down on the swipes coming out with their horses, and with their dirty horsey pants on and the horse blankets swung over their shoulders, same as I had been doing all the year before. I liked one thing about the same as the other, sitting up there and feeling grand and being down there and looking up at the yaps and feeling grander and more important, too. One thing's about as good as another, if you take it just right. I've often said that.

Well, right in front of me, in the grand stand that day, there was a fellow with a couple of girls and they was about my age. The young fellow was a nice guy all right. He was the kind maybe that goes to college and then comes to be a lawyer or maybe a newspaper editor or something like that, but he wasn't stuck on himself. There

are some of that kind are all right and he was one of the ones.

He had his sister with him and another girl and the sister looked around over his shoulder, accidental at first, not intending to start anything—she wasn't that kind—and her eyes and mine happened to meet.

You know how it is. Gee, she was a peach! She had on a soft dress, kind of a blue stuff and it looked carelessly made, but was well sewed and made and everything. I knew that much. I blushed when she looked right at me and so did she. She was the nicest girl I've ever seen in my life. She wasn't stuck on herself and she could talk proper grammar without being like a school teacher or something like that. What I mean is, she was O. K. I think maybe her father was well-to-do, but not rich to make her chesty because she was his daughter, as some are. Maybe he owned a drug store or a drygoods store in their home town, or something like that. She never told me and I never asked.

My own people are all O. K. too, when you come to that. My grandfather was Welsh and over in the old country, in Wales he was— But never mind that.

The first heat of the first race come off and the young fellow setting there with the two girls left them and went down to make a bet. I knew what he was up to, but he didn't talk big and noisy and let everyone around know he was a sport, as some do. He wasn't that kind. Well, he come back and I heard him tell the two girls what horse

he'd bet on, and when the heat was trotted they all half got to their feet and acted in the excited, sweaty way people do when they've got money down on a race, and the horse they bet on is up there pretty close at the end, and they think maybe he'll come on with a rush, but he never does because he hasn't got the old juice in him, come right down to it.

And then, pretty soon, the horses came out for the 2.18 pace and there was a horse in it I knew. He was a horse Bob French had in his string but Bob didn't own him. He was a horse owned by a Mr. Mathers down at Marietta, Ohio.

This Mr. Mathers had a lot of money and owned some coal mines or something, and he had a swell place out in the country, and he was stuck on race horses, but was a Presbyterian or something, and I think more than likely his wife was one, too, maybe a stiffer one than himself. So he never raced his horses hisself, and the story round the Ohio race tracks was that when one of his horses got ready to go to the races he turned him over to Bob French and pretended to his wife he was sold.

So Bob had the horses and he did pretty much as he pleased and you can't blame Bob, at least, I never did. Sometimes he was out to win and sometimes he wasn't. I never cared much about that when I was swiping a horse. What I did want to know was that my horse had the speed and could go out in front, if you wanted him to.

And, as I'm telling you, there was Bob in this race with one of Mr. Mathers' horses, was named "About Ben

Ahem" or something like that, and was fast as a streak. He was a gelding and had a mark of 2.21, but could step in .08 or .09.

Because when Burt and I were out, as I've told you, the year before, there was a nigger, Burt knew, worked for Mr. Mathers and we went out there one day when we didn't have no race on at the Marietta Fair and our boss Harry was gone home.

And so everyone was gone to the fair but just this one nigger and he took us all through Mr. Mathers' swell house and he and Burt tapped a bottle of wine Mr. Mathers had hid in his bedroom, back in a closet, without his wife knowing, and he showed us this Ahem horse. Burt was always stuck on being a driver but didn't have much chance to get to the top, being a nigger, and he and the other nigger gulped that whole bottle of wine and Burt got a little lit up.

So the nigger let Burt take this About Ben Ahem and step him a mile in a track Mr. Mathers had all to himself, right there on the farm. And Mr. Mathers had one child, a daughter, kinda sick and not very good looking, and she came home and we had to hustle and get About Ben Ahem stuck back in the barn.

I'm only telling you to get everything straight. At Sandusky, that afternoon I was at the fair, this young fellow with the two girls was fussed, being with the girls and losing his bet. You know how a fellow is that way.

One of them was his girl and the other his sister. I had figured that out.

"Gee whizz," I says to myself, "I'm going to give him the dope."

He was mighty nice when I touched him on the shoulder. He and the girls were nice to me right from the start and clear to the end. I'm not blaming them.

And so he leaned back and I give him the dope on About Ben Ahem. "Don't bet a cent on this first heat because he'll go like an oxen hitched to a plow, but when the first heat is over go right down and lay on your pile." That's what I told him.

Well, I never saw a fellow treat any one sweller. There was a fat man sitting beside the little girl, that had looked at me twice by this time, and I at her, and both blushing, and what did he do but have the nerve to turn and ask the fat man to get up and change places with me so I could set with his crowd.

Gee whizz, craps amighty. There I was. What a chump I was to go and get gay up there in the West House bar, and just because that dude was standing there with a cane and that kind of a necktie on, to go and get all balled up and drink that whiskey, just to show off.

Of course she would know, me setting right beside her and letting her smell of my breath. I could have kicked myself right down out of that grand stand and all around that race track and made a faster record than most of the skates of horses they had there that year.

Because that girl wasn't any mutt of a girl. What wouldn't I have give right then for a stick of chewing gum to chew, or a lozenger, or some liquorice, or most anything. I was glad I had those twenty-five cent cigars in my pocket and right away I give that fellow one and lit one myself. Then that fat man got up and we changed places and there I was, plunked right down beside her.

They introduced themselves and the fellow's best girl, he had with him, was named Miss Elinor Woodbury, and her father was a manufacturer of barrels from a place called Tiffin, Ohio. And the fellow himself was named Wilbur Wessen and his sister was Miss Lucy Wessen.

I suppose it was their having such swell names got me off my trolley. A fellow, just because he has been a swipe with a race horse, and works taking care of horses for a man in the teaming, delivery, and storage business, isn't any better or worse than any one else. I've often thought that, and said it too.

But you know how a fellow is. There's something in that kind of nice clothes, and the kind of nice eyes she had, and the way she had looked at me, awhile before, over her brother's shoulder, and me looking back at her, and both of us blushing.

I couldn't show her up for a boob, could I?

I made a fool of myself, that's what I did. I said my name was Walter Mathers from Marietta, Ohio, and then I told all three of them the smashingest lie you ever heard. What I said was that my father owned the horse About Ben Ahem and that he had let him out to this Bob

French for racing purposes, because our family was proud and had never gone into racing that way, in our own name, I mean. Then I had got started and they were all leaning over and listening, and Miss Lucy Wessen's eyes were shining, and I went the whole hog.

I told about our place down at Marietta, and about the big stables and the grand brick house we had on a hill, up above the Ohio River, but I knew enough not to do it in no bragging way. What I did was to start things and then let them drag the rest out of me. I acted just as reluctant to tell as I could. Our family hasn't got any barrel factory, and since I've known us, we've always been pretty poor, but not asking anything of any one at that, and my grandfather, over in Wales—but never mind that.

We set there talking like we had known each other for years and years, and I went and told them that my father had been expecting maybe this Bob French wasn't on the square, and had sent me up to Sandusky on the sly to find out what I could.

And I bluffed it through I had found out all about the 2.18 pace, in which About Ben Ahem was to start.

I said he would lose the first heat by pacing like a lame cow and then he would come back and skin 'em alive after that. And to back up what I said I took thirty dollars out of my pocket and handed it to Mr. Wilbur Wessen and asked him, would he mind, after the first heat, to go down and place it on About Ben Ahem for whatever odds

he could get. What I said was that I didn't want Bob French to see me and none of the swipes.

Sure enough the first heat come off and About Ben Ahem went off his stride, up the back stretch, and looked like a wooden horse or a sick one, and come in to be last. Then this Wilbur Wessen went down to the betting place under the grand stand and there I was with the two girls, and when that Miss Woodbury was looking the other way once, Lucy Wessen kinda, with her shoulder you know, kinda touched me. Not just tucking down, I don't mean. You know how a woman can do. They get close, but not getting gay either. You know what they do. Gee whizz.

And then they give me a jolt. What they had done, when I didn't know, was to get together, and they had decided Wilbur Wessen would bet fifty dollars, and the two girls had gone and put in ten dollars each, of their own money, too. I was sick then, but I was sicker later.

About the gelding, About Ben Ahem, and their winning their money, I wasn't worried a lot about that. It come out O. K. Ahem stepped the next three heats like a bushel of spoiled eggs going to market before they could be found out, and Wilbur Wessen had got nine to two for the money. There was something else eating at me.

Because Wilbur come back, after he had bet the money, and after that he spent most of his time talking to that Miss Woodbury, and Lucy Wessen and I was left alone together like on a desert island. Gee, if I'd only been on the square or if there had been any way of getting my-

self on the square. There ain't any Walter Mathers, like I said to her and them, and there hasn't ever been one, but if there was, I bet I'd go to Marietta, Ohio, and shoot him to-morrow.

There I was, big boob that I am. Pretty soon the race was over, and Wilbur had gone down and collected our money, and we had a hack down-town, and he stood us a swell supper at the West House, and a bottle of champagne beside.

And I was with that girl and she wasn't saying much, and I wasn't saying much either. One think I know. She wasn't stuck on me because of the lie about my father being rich and all that. There's a way you know. . . . Craps amighty. There's a kind of girl, you see just once in your life, and if you don't get busy and make hay, then you're gone for good and all, and might as well go jump off a bridge. They give you a look from inside of them somewhere, and it ain't no vamping, and what it means is—you want that girl to be your wife, and you want nice things around her like flowers and swell clothes, and you want her to have the kids you're going to have, and you want good music played and no rag time. Gee whizz.

There's a place over near Sandusky, across a kind of bay, and it's called Cedar Point. And after we had supper we went over to it in a launch, all by ourselves. Wilbur and Miss Lucy and that Miss Woodbury had to catch a ten o'clock train back to Tiffin, Ohio, because, when you're out with girls like that you can't get careless and

miss any trains and stay out all night, like you can with some kinds of Janes.

And Wilbur blowed himself to the launch and it cost him fifteen cold plunks, but I wouldn't never have knew if I hadn't listened. He wasn't no tin horn kind of a sport.

Over at the Cedar Point place, we didn't stay around where there was a gang of common kind of cattle at all.

There was big dance halls and dining places for yaps, and there was a beach you could walk along and get where it was dark, and we went there.

She didn't talk hardly at all and neither did I, and I was thinking how glad I was my mother was all right, and always made us kids learn to eat with a fork at table, and not swill soup, and not be noisy and rough like a gang you see around a race track that way.

Then Wilbur and his girl went away up the beach and Lucy and I sat down in a dark place, where there was some roots of old trees, the water had washed up, and after that the time, till we had to go back in the launch and they had to catch their trains, wasn't nothing at all. It went like winking your eye.

Here's how it was. The place we were setting in was dark, like I said, and there was the roots from that old stump sticking up like arms, and there was a watery smell, and the night was like—as if you could put your hand out and feel it—so warm and soft and dark and sweet like an orange.

I most cried and I most swore and I most jumped up and danced, I was so mad and happy and sad.

When Wilbur come back from being alone with his girl, and she saw him coming, Lucy she says, "we got to go to the train now," and she was most crying too, but she never knew nothing I knew, and she couldn't be so all busted up. And then, before Wilbur and Miss Woodbury got up to where we was, she put her face up and kissed me quick and put her head up against me and she was all quivering and—Gee whizz.

Sometimes I hope I have cancer and die. I guess you know what I mean. We went in the launch across the bay to the train like that, and it was dark, too. She whispered and said it was like she and I could get out of the boat and walk on the water, and it sounded foolish, but I knew what she meant.

And then quick we were right at the depot, and there was a big gang of yaps, the kind that goes to the fairs, and crowded and milling around like cattle, and how could I tell her? "It won't be long because you'll write and I'll write to you." That's all she said.

I got a chance like a hay barn afire. A swell chance I got.

And maybe she would write me, down at Marietta that way, and the letter would come back, and stamped on the front of it by the U.S.A. "there ain't any such guy," or something like that, whatever they stamp on a letter that way.

And me trying to pass myself off for a bigbug and a swell—to her, as decent a little body as God ever made. Craps amighty—a swell chance I got!

And then the train come in, and she got on it, and Wilbur Wessen he come and shook hands with me, and that Miss Woodbury was nice too and bowed to me, and I at her, and the train went and I busted out and cried like a kid.

Gee, I could have run after that train and made Dan Patch look like a freight train after a wreck but, socks amighty, what was the use? Did you ever see such a fool?

I'll bet you what—if I had an arm broke right now or a train had run over my foot—I wouldn't go to no doctor at all. I'd go set down and let her hurt and hurt—that's what I'd do.

I'll bet you what—if I hadn't a drunk that booze I'd a never been such a boob as to go tell such a lie—that couldn't never be made straight to a lady like her.

I wish I had that fellow right here that had on a Windsor tie and carried a cane. I'd smash him for fair. Gosh darn his eyes. He's a big fool—that's what he is.

And if I'm not another you just go find me one and I'll quit working and be a bum and give him my job. I don't care nothing for working, and earning money, and saving it for no such boob as myself.

The Easter Torch

By I. L. Caragiale

Translated by Lucy Byng

LEIBA ZIBAL, mine host of Podeni, was sitting lost in thought, by a table placed in the shadow in front of the inn; he was awaiting the arrival of the coach which should have come some time ago; it was already an hour behind time.

The story of Zibal's life is a long and cheerless one: when he is taken with one of his feverish attacks it is a diversion for him to analyse one by one the most important events in that life.

Huckster, seller of hardware, jobber, between whiles even rougher work perhaps, seller of old clothes, then tailor, and boot-black in a dingy alley in Jassy; all this had happened to him since the accident whereby he lost his situation as office boy in a big wine-shop. Two porters were carrying a barrel down to a cellar under the supervision of the lad Zibal. A difference arose between them as to the division of their earnings. One of them seized a piece of wood that lay at hand and struck his comrade on the forehead, who fell to the ground covered with blood. At the sight of the wild deed the boy gave a cry of alarm, but the wretch hurried through the yard, and in passing gave the lad a blow. Zibal fell to the ground fainting with

fear. After several months in bed he returned to his master, only to find his place filled. Then began a hard struggle for existence, which increased in difficulty after his marriage with Sura. Their hard lot was borne with patience. Sura's brother, the innkeeper of Podeni, died; the inn passed into Zibal's hands, and he carried on the business on his own account.

Here he had been for the last five years. He had saved a good bit of money and collected good wine—a commodity that will always be worth good money—Leiba had escaped from poverty, but they were sickly, the whole three of them, himself, his wife, and his child, all victims of malaria, and men are rough and quarrelsome in Podeni—slanderous, scoffers, revilers, accused of vitriol throwing. And the threats! A threat is very terrible to a character that bends easily beneath every blow. The thought of a threat worked more upon Leiba's nerves than did his attacks of fever.

"Oh, wretched Gentile!" he thought, sighing.

This "wretched" referred to Gheorghe—wherever he might be!—a man between whom and himself a most unpleasant affair had arisen.

Gheorghe came to the inn one autumn morning, tired with his walk; he was just out of the hospital—so he said—and was looking for work. The innkeeper took him into his service. But Gheorghe showed himself to be a brutal and a sullen man. He swore continually, and muttered to himself alone in

the yard. He was a bad servant, lazy and insolent, and he stole. He threatened his mistress one day when she was pregnant, cursing her, and striking her on the stomach. Another time he set a dog on little Strul.

Leiba paid him his wages at once, and dismissed him. But Gheorghe would not go: he asserted with violence that he had been engaged for a year. Then the innkeeper sent to the town hall to get guards to remove him.

Gheorghe put his hand swiftly to his breast, crying: "Jew!" and began to rail at his master. Unfortunately, a cart full of customers arrived at that moment. Gheorghe began to grin, saying: "What frightened you, Master Leiba? Look, I am going now." Then bending fiercely over the bar towards Leiba, who drew back as far as possible, he whispered: "Expect me on Easter Eve; we'll crack red eggs together, Jew! You will know then what I have done to you, and I will answer for it." '

Just then, customers entered the inn.

"May we meet in good health at Easter, Master Leiba!" added Gheorghe as he left.

. . . . . .

Leiba went to the town hall, then to the sub-prefecture to denounce the threatener, begging that he might be watched. The sub-prefect was a lively young man; he first accepted Leiba's humble offering, then he began to laugh at the timid Jew, and to make

fun of him. Leiba tried hard to make him realize the gravity of the situation, and pointed out how isolated the house stood from the village, and even from the high road. But the sub-prefect, with a more serious air, advised him to be prudent; he must not mention such things, for, truly, it would arouse the desire to do them in a village where men were rough and poor, ready to break the law.

A few days later, an official with two riders came to see him about Gheorghe; he was "wanted" for some crime.

If only Leiba had been able to put up with him until the arrival of these men! In the meanwhile, no one knew the whereabouts of Gheorghe. Although this had happened some time ago, Gheorghe's appearance, the movement as though he would have drawn something from his breast, and the threatening words had all remained deeply impressed upon the mind of the terror-stricken man. How was it that that memory remained so clear?

It was Easter Eve.

From the top of the hill, from the village lying among the lakes about two miles away, came the sound of church bells. One hears in a strange way when one is feverish, now so loud, now so far away. The coming night was the night before Easter, the night of the fulfilment of Gheorghe's promise.

"But perhaps they have caught him by now!"

Moreover, Zibal only meant to stay at Podeni till next quarter-day. With his capital he could open a good business in Jassy. In a town, Leiba would regain his health, he would be near the police station—he could treat the police, the commissionaires, the sergeants. Who pays well gets well guarded.

In a large town, the night brings noise and light, not darkness and silence as in the isolated valley of Podeni. There is an inn in Jassy—there in the corner, just the place for a shop! An inn where girls sing all night long, a Café Chantant. What a gay and rousing life! There, at all hours of the day and night, officials and their girls, and other dirty Christians will need entertainment.

What is the use of bothering oneself here where business keeps falling off, especially since the coming of the railway which only skirts the marshes at some distance?

"Leiba," calls Sura from within, "the coach is coming, one can hear the bells."

The Podeni valley is a ravine enclosed on all sides by wooded hills. In a hollow towards the south lie several deep pools caused by the springs which rise in the hills; above them lie some stretches of ground covered with bush and rushes. Leiba's inn stands in the centre of the valley, between the pools and the more elevated ground to the north; it is an old stone building, strong as a small fortress: although the ground is marshy, the walls and cellars are very dry.

At Sura's voice Leiba raises himself painfully from his chair, stretching his tired limbs; he takes a long look towards the east; not a sign of the diligence.

"It is not coming; you imagined it," he replied to his wife, and sat down again.

Very tired the man crossed his arms on the table, and laid his head upon them, for it was burning. The warmth of the spring sun began to strike the surface of the marshes and a pleasant lassitude enveloped his nerves, and his thoughts began to run riot as a sick man's will, gradually taking on strange forms and colours.

Gheorghe—Easter Eve—burglars—Jassy—the inn in the centre of the town—a gay restaurant doing well —restored health.

And he dozed.

Sura and the child went without a great deal up here.

Leiba went to the door of the inn and looked out on to the road.

On the main road there was a good deal of traffic, an unceasing noise of wheels accompanied by the rhythmic sound of horses' hooves trotting upon the smooth asphalt.

But suddenly the traffic stopped, and from Copou a group of people could be seen approaching, gesticulating and shouting excitedly.

The crowd appeared to be escorting somebody: soldiers, a guard and various members of the public. Curious onlookers appeared at every door of the inn.

"Ah," thought Lieba, "they have laid hands on a thief."

The procession drew nearer. Sura detached herself from the others, and joined Leiba on the steps of the inn.

"What is it, Sura?" he asked.

"A madman escaped from Golia."

"Let us close the inn so that he cannot get at us."

"He is bound now, but a little while ago he escaped. He fought with all the soldiers. A rough Gentile in the crowd pushed a Jew against the madman and he bit him on the cheek."

Leiba could see well from the steps; from the stair below Sura watched with the child in her arms.

It was, in fact, a violent lunatic held on either side by two men: his wrists were tightly bound over each other by a thick cord. He was a man of gigantic stature with a head like a bull, thick black hair, and hard, grizzled beard and whiskers. Through his shirt, which had been torn in the struggle, his broad chest was visible, covered like his head, with a mass of hair. His feet were bare; his mouth was full of blood, and he continually spat out hair which he had bitten from the Jew's beard.

Every one stood still. Why? The guards unbound the lunatic's hands. The crowd drew to one

side, leaving a large space around him. The madman looked about him, and his fierce glance rested upon Zibal's doorway; he gnashed his teeth, made a dash for the three steps, and in a flash, seizing the child's head in his right hand and Sura's in his left, he knocked them together with such force that they cracked like so many fresh eggs. A sound was heard, a scrunching impossible to describe, as the two skulls cracked together.

Leiba, with bursting heart, like a man who falls from an immense height, tried to cry out: "The whole world abandons me to the tender mercies of a madman!" But his voice refused to obey him.

"Get up, Jew!" cried some one, beating loudly upon the table with a stick.

"It's a bad joke," said Sura from the doorway of the inn, "thus to frighten the man out of his sleep, you stupid peasant!"

"What has scared you, Jew?" asked the wag, laughing. "You sleep in the afternoon, eh? Get up, customers are coming, the mail coach is arriving."

And, according to his silly habit which greatly irritated the Jew, he tried to take his arm and tickle him.

"Let me alone!" cried the innkeeper, drawing back and pushing him away with all his might. "Can you not see that I am ill? Leave me in peace."

The coach arrived at last, nearly three hours late. There were two passengers who seated themselves

together with the driver, whom they had invited to share their table.

The conversation of the travellers threw a light upon recent events. At the highest posting station, a robbery with murder had been committed during the night in the inn of a Jew. The murdered inn-keeper was to have provided a change of horses. The thieves had taken them, and while other horses were being found in the village the curious travellers could examine the scene of the crime at their leisure. Five victims! But the details! From just seeing the ruined house one could believe it to have been some cruel vendetta or the work of some religious fanatic. In stories of sectarian fanaticism one heard occasionally of such extravagant crimes.

Leiba shook with a violent access of fever and listened aghast.

What followed must have undoubtedly filled the driver with respect. The young passengers were two students, one of philosophy, the other of medicine; they were returning to amuse themselves in their native town. They embarked upon a violent academic discussion upon crime and its causes, and, to give him his due, the medical student was better informed than the philosopher.

Atavism; alcoholism and its pathological consequences; defective birth; deformity; Paludism; then nervous disorders! Such and such conquest of modern science—but the case of reversion to type! Dar-

win, Häckel, Lombroso. At the mention of reversion to type, the driver opened wide his eyes in which shone a profound admiration for the conquests of modern science.

"It is obvious," added the medical student. "The so-called criminal proper, taken as a type, has unusually long arms, and very short feet, a flat and narrow forehead, and a much developed occiput. To the experienced eye his face is characteristically coarse and bestial; he is a rudimentary man: he is, I would say, a beast which has but lately got used to standing on its hind legs only, and to raising its head towards the sky, towards the light."

At the age of twenty, after so much excitement, and after a good repast with wine so well prepared, and so well matured as Leiba's, a phrase with a lyrical touch came well even from a medical student.

Between his studies of Darwin and Lombroso, the enthusiastic youth had found time to imbibe a little Schopenhauer—"towards the sky, towards the light!"

Leiba was far from understanding these "illuminating" ideas. Perhaps for the first time did such grand words and fine subtleties of thought find expression in the damp atmosphere of Podeni. But that which he understood better than anything, much better even than the speaker, was the striking illustration of the theory: the case of reversion to type he knew in flesh and blood, it was the portrait of Gheorghe. This portrait, which had just been drawn

in broad outline only, he could fill in perfectly in his own mind, down to the most minute details.

. . . . . .

The coach had gone. Leiba followed it with his eyes until, turning to the left, it was lost to sight round the hill. The sun was setting behind the ridge to the west, and the twilight began to weave soft shapes in the Podeni valley.

The gloomy innkeeper began to turn over in his mind all that he had heard. In the dead of night, lost in the darkness, a man, two women and two young children, torn without warning from the gentle arms of sleep by the hands of beasts with human faces, and sacrificed one after the other, the agonized cries of the children, cut short by the dagger ripping open their bodies, the neck slashed with a hatchet, the dull rattle in the throat with each gush of blood through the wound; and the last victim, half-distraught, in a corner, witness of the scene, and awaiting his turn. A condition far worse than execution was that of the Jew without protection in the hands of the Gentile—skulls too fragile for such fierce hands as those of the madman just now.

Leiba's lips, parched with fever, trembled as they mechanically followed his thoughts. A violent shivering fit seized him; he entered the porch of the inn with tottering steps.

"There is no doubt," thought Sura, "Leiba is not at all well, he is really ill; Leiba has got 'ideas' into his

head. Is not that easy to understand after all he has been doing these last days, and especially after what he has done to-day?"

He had had the inn closed before the lights were lit, to remain so until the Sabbath was ended. Three times had some customers knocked at the door, calling to him, in familiar voices, to undo it. He had trembled at each knock and had stood still, whispering softly and with terrified eyes:

"Do not move—I want no Gentiles here."

Then he had passed under the porch, and had listened at the top of the stone steps by the door which was secured with a bar of wood. He shook so that he could scarcely stand, but he would not rest. The most distressing thing of all was that he had answered Sura's persistent questions sharply, and had sent her to bed, ordering her to put out the light at once. She had protested meanwhile, but the man had repeated the order curtly enough, and she had had unwillingly to submit, resigning herself to postponing to a later date any explanation of his conduct.

Sura had put out the lamp, had gone to bed, and now slept by the side of Strul.

The woman was right. Leiba was really ill.

. . . . . .

Night had fallen. For a long time Leiba had been sitting, listening by the doorway which gave on to the passage.

What is that?

Indistinct sounds came from the distance—horses trotting, the noise of heavy blows, mysterious and agitated conversations. The effort of listening intently in the solitude of the night sharpens the sense of hearing: when the eye is disarmed and powerless, the ear seems to struggle to assert its power.

But it was not imagination. From the road leading hither from the main road came the sound of approaching horses. Leiba rose, and tried to get nearer to the big door in the passage. The door was firmly shut by a heavy bar of wood across it, the ends of which ran into holes in the wall. At his first step the sand scrunching under his slippers made an indiscreet noise. He drew his feet from his slippers, and waited in the corner. Then, without a sound that could be heard by an unexpectant ear, he went to the door in the corridor, just as the riders passed in front of it at a walking pace. They were speaking very low to each other, but not so low but that Leiba could quite well catch these words:

"He has gone to bed early."

"Supposing he has gone away?"

"His turn will come; but I should have liked—"

No more was intelligible; the men were already some distance away.

To whom did these words refer? Who had gone to bed or gone away? Whose turn would come another time? Who would have liked something? And what was it he wanted? What did they want

on that by-road—a road only used by anyone wishing to find the inn?

An overwhelming sense of fatigue seemed to overcome Leiba.

"Could it be Gheorghe?"

Leiba felt as if his strength was giving way, and he sat down by the door. Confused thoughts chased each other through his head, he could not think clearly or come to any decision.

Terrified, he re-entered the inn, struck a match, and lighted a small petroleum lamp.

It was an apology for a light; the wick was turned so low as to conceal the flame in the brass receiver; only by means of the opening round the receiver could some of the vertical shafts of light penetrate into a gloom that was like the darkness of death—all the same it was sufficient to enable him to see well into the familiar corners of the inn. Ah! How much less is the difference between the sun and the tiniest spark of light than between the latter and the gloom of blindness.

The clock on the wall ticked audibly. The monotonous sound irritated Leiba. He put his hand over the swinging pendulum, and stayed its movement.

His throat was parched. He was thirsty. He washed a small glass in a three-legged tub by the side of the bar and tried to pour some good brandy out of a decanter; but the mouth of the decanter began to clink loudly on the edge of the glass. This noise was

still more irritating. A second attempt, in spite of his effort to conquer his weakness, met with no greater success.

Then, giving up the idea of the glass, he let it fall gently into the water, and drank several times out of the decanter. After that he pushed the decanter back into its place; as it touched the shelf it made an alarming clatter. For a moment he waited, appalled by such a catastrophe. Then he took the lamp, and placed it in the niche of the window which lighted the passage: the door, the pavement, and the wall which ran at right angles to the passage, were illuminated by almost imperceptible streaks of light.

He seated himself near the doorway and listened intently.

From the hill came the sound of bells ringing in the Resurrection morning. It meant that midnight was past, day was approaching. Ah! If only the rest of this long night might pass as had the first half!

The sound of sand trodden underfoot! But he was sitting in the corner, and had not stirred; a second noise, followed by many such. There could be no doubt some one was outside, here, quite near. Leiba rose, pressing his hand to his heart, and trying to swallow a suspicious lump in his throat.

There were several people outside—and Gheorghe! Yes, he was there; yes, the bells on the hill had rung the Resurrection.

They spoke softly:

"I tell you he is asleep. I saw when the lights went out."

"Good, we will take the whole nest."

"I will undo the door, I understand how it works. We must cut an opening—the beam runs along here."

He seemed to feel the touch of the men outside as they measured the distance on the wood. A big gimlet could be heard boring its way through the dry bark of the old oak. Leiba felt the need of support; he steadied himself against the door with his left hand while he covered his eyes with the right.

Then, through some inexplicable play of the senses, he heard, from within, quite loud and clear:

"Leiba! Here comes the coach."

It was surely Sura's voice. A warm ray of hope! A moment of joy! It was just another dream! But Leiba drew his left hand quickly back; the point of the tool, piercing the wood at that spot, had pricked the palm of his hand.

Was there any chance of escape? Absurd! In his burning brain the image of the gimlet took inconceivable dimensions. The instrument, turning continually, grew indefinitely, and the opening became larger and larger, large enough at last to enable the monster to step through the round aperture without having to bend. All that surged through such a brain transcends the thoughts of man; life rose to such a pitch of exaltation that everything seen, heard,

felt, appeared to be enormous, the sense of proportion became chaotic.

The work outside was continued with method and perseverance. Four times in succession Leiba had seen the sharp steel tooth pierce through to his side and draw back again.

"Now, give me the saw," said Gheorghe.

The narrow end of a saw appeared through the first hole, and started to work with quick, regular movements. The plan was easy to understand; four holes in four corners of one panel; the saw made cuts between them; the gimlet was driven well home in the centre of the panel; when the piece became totally separated from the main body of the wood it was pulled out; through the opening thus made a strong hand inserted itself, seized the bar, pushed it to one side and—Gentiles are in Leiba's house.

In a few moments, this same gimlet would cause the destruction of Leiba and his domestic hearth. The two executioners would hold the victim prostrate on the ground, and Gheorghe, with heel upon his body, would slowly bore the gimlet into the bone of the living breast as he had done into the dead wood, deeper and deeper, till it reached the heart, silencing its wild beatings and pinning it to the spot.

Leiba broke into a cold sweat; the man was overcome by his own imagination, and sank softly to his knees as though life were ebbing from him under the weight of this last horror, overwhelmed by the

thought that he must abandon now all hope of saving himself.

"Yes! Pinned to the spot," he said, despairingly. "Yes! Pinned to the spot."

He stayed a moment, staring at the light by the window. For some moments he stood aghast, as though in some other world, then he repeated with quivering eyelids:

"Yes! Pinned to the spot."

Suddenly a strange change took place in him, a complete revulsion of feeling; he ceased to tremble, his despair disappeared, and his face, so discomposed by the prolonged crisis, assumed an air of strange serenity. He straightened himself with the decision of a strong and healthy man who makes for an easy goal.

The line between the two upper punctures of the panel was finished. Leiba went up, curious to see the working of the tool. His confidence became more pronounced. He nodded his head as though to say: "I still have time."

The saw cut the last fibre near the hole towards which it was working, and began to saw between the lower holes.

"There are still three," thought Leiba, and with the caution of the most experienced burglar he softly entered the inn. He searched under the bar, picking up something, and went out again as he entered, hiding the object he had in his hand as though he feared

somehow the walls might betray him, and went back on tiptoe to the door.

Something terrible had happened; the work outside had ceased—there was nothing to be heard.

"What is the matter? Has he gone? What has happened?" flashed through the mind of the man inside. He bit his lower lip at such a thought, full of bitter disappointment.

"Ha, ha!" It was an imaginary deception; the work began again, and he followed it with the keenest interest, his heart beating fast. His decision was taken, he was tormented by an incredible desire to see the thing finished.

"Quicker!" he thought. with impatience. "Quicker!"

Again the sound of bells ringing on the hill.

"Hurry up, old fellow, the daylight will catch us!" said a voice outside, as though impelled by the will of the man within.

The work was pushed on rapidly. Only a few more movements and all the punctures in the panel would be united.

At last!

Gently the drill carried out the four-sided piece of wood. A large and supple hand was thrust in; but before it reached the bars it sought two screams were heard, while, with great force, Leiba enclosed it with the free end of the noose, which was round a block fixed to the cellar door.

The trap was ingeniously contrived: a long rope fastened round a block of wood; lengthwise, at the place where the sawn panel had disappeared, was a spring-ring which Leiba held open with his left hand, while at the same time his right hand held the other end taut. At the psychological moment he sprang the ring, and rapidly seizing the free end of the rope with both hands he pulled the whole arm inside by a supreme effort.

In a second the operation was complete. It was accompanied by two cries, one of despair, the other of triumph: the hand was "pinned to the spot." Footsteps were heard retreating rapidly: Gheorghe's companions were abandoning to Leiba the prey so cleverly caught.

The Jew hurried into the inn, took the lamp and with a decided movement turned up the wick as high as it would go: the light concealed by the metal receiver rose gay and victorious, restoring definite outlines to the nebulous forms around.

Zibal went into the passage with the lamp. The burglar groaned terribly; it was obvious from the stiffening of his arm that he had given up the useless struggle. The hand was swollen, the fingers were curved as though they would seize something. The Jew placed the lamp near it—a shudder, the fever is returning. He moved the light quite close, until, trembling, he touch the burglar's hand with the burning chimney; a violent convulsion of the finger was

followed by a dull groan. Leiba was startled at the sight of this phenomenon.

Leiba trembled—his eyes betrayed a strange exaltation. He burst into a shout of laughter which shook the empty corridor and resounded in the inn.

Day was breaking.

Sura woke up suddenly—in her sleep she seemed to hear a terrible moaning. Leiba was not in the room. All that had happened previously returned to her mind. Something terrible had taken place. She jumped out of bed and lighted the candle. Leiba's bed had not been disturbed. He had not been to bed at all.

Where was he? The woman glanced out of the window; on the hill in front shone a little group of small bright lights, they flared and jumped, now they died away, now, once more, they soared upwards. They told of the Resurrection. Sura undid the window; then she could hear groans from down by the door. Terrified, she hurried down the stairs. The corridor was lighted up. As she emerged through the doorway, the woman was astonished by a horrible sight.

Upon a wooden chair, his elbows on his knees, his beard in his hand, sat Leiba. Like a scientist, who, by mixing various elements, hopes to surprise one of nature's subtle secrets which has long escaped and worried him, Leiba kept his eyes fixed upon some hanging object, black and shapeless, under which,

upon another chair of convenient height, there burnt a big torch. He watched, without turning a hair, the process of decomposition of the hand which most certainly would not have spared him. He did not hear the groans of the unhappy being outside: he was more interested, at present, in watching than in listening.

He followed with eagerness each contortion, every strange convulsion of the fingers till one by one they became powerless. They were like the legs of a beetle which contract and stretch, waving in agitated movement, vigorously, then slower and slower until they lie paralysed by the play of some cruel child.

It was over. The roasted hand swelled slowly and remained motionless. Sura gave a cry.

"Leiba!"

He made a sign to her not to disturb him. A greasy smell of burnt flesh pervaded the passage: a crackling and small explosions were heard.

"Leiba! What is it?" repeated the woman.

It was broad day. Sura stretched forward and withdrew the bar. The door opened outwards, dragging with it Gheorghe's body, suspended by the right arm. A crowd of villagers, all carrying lighted torches, invaded the premises.

"What is it? What is it?"

They soon understood what had happened. Leiba, who up to now had remained motionless, rose gravely to his feet. He made room for himself to pass, quietly pushing the crowd to one side.

"How did it happen, Jew?" asked some one.

"Leiba Zibal," said the innkeeper in a loud voice, and with a lofty gesture, "goes to Jassy to tell the Rabbi that Leiba Zibal is a Jew no longer. Leiba Zibal is a Christian—for Leiba Zibal has lighted a torch for Christ."

And the man moved slowly up the hill, towards the sunrise, like the prudent traveller who knows that the long journey is not achieved with hasty steps.

Makar Chudra

(A Gipsy Tale)

By Maxim Gorki

English Version by H. T. S.

A MOIST and chilly wind carried over the steppe the melancholy murmur of the waves that splashed against the shore, and of the shrubbery which covered the water's edge. Now and then the wind drove before it a multitude of withered yellow leaves, whirling them into the camp-fire and fanning its flames, whereupon a shudder crept over the darkness that enveloped us, piercing the autumn night and revealing to the left—the limitless steppe, and to the right—the infinite ocean against the background of which crouched the figure of Makar Chudra, an old gypsy who had been set to watch over the horses of the camp which was situated about fifty yards from us.

He seemed utterly unconscious of the cold blasts of the wind that whipped open his gypsy cloak, exposing and lashing unmercifully his hairy bronze-colored chest. Turning toward me his free, strong and handsome face from his recumbent posture, he thoughtfully puffed away at his big pipe, blowing thick clouds of smoke from his mouth and nostrils. His motionless eyes were fixed beyond me upon the darkness that stretched endlessly over the death-

like silence of the steppe. He talked to me without interruption, making no motion whatsoever to shield himself against the pitiless buffeting of the storm.

"And so you are joining us? That's fine! You have chosen a splendid course, Falcon. We all have to meet our fate. Go about and see the world, and when you have seen enough, lie down and die—and that's all!

"Life? Other people?" he continued—"H'm! What business is it of yours? Are you not yourself a slice of life? And as for other people, they have been living without you and they will continue to live without you. Do you think anybody needs you? You're neither bread nor a staff; why then should people have need of you?

"To learn and to teach, you say! Can you ever learn how to make people happy? No, you can't. You will only become gray and then you will say that you must teach others. But what are you going to teach them? Everybody knows what he needs. The wise take everything, the fools get nothing, and everybody learns for himself. . . .

"Human beings are ridiculous, crowding themselves together into a single heap and stifling the life out of one another, when there is so much room in the world,"—he extended his hand toward the wide steppe.—"And they are forevermore working. For what? For whom? Nobody knows. You behold a man at the plough, and you think: First he wastes away his strength tilling the earth by the sweat of his brow, and then he stretches his own corpse in it and rots away. Nothing remains of him, he

does not even reap his own sowing, but dies just as he was born, a blockhead.

"Can it be that he is born for this,—to dig about in the earth and then to die even before he has succeeded in preparing his own grave? Has he known freedom? Does he understand the wide expanse of the steppe? The multitudinous murmur of the sea, is his heart ever gladdened by that sound? H'm! From the moment of his birth he is a slave, and throughout all his life he remains a slave, that's all! He can do nothing to help himself, except to put a noose around his head if ever he becomes a little wiser.

"But as for me—just look at me, will you—I have seen so much in my fifty odd years that if I were to write it all down on paper, it would fill more than a thousand sacks like the one you've got there. Yes, and then there would be some left over. I'd like you to show me the country I haven't been to. Why, you haven't even *heard* of all the countries I have visited. That's the way to live—wandering, wandering,—staying only for a little while in each place.—Why not? Just as the day and the night are forever on the go, chasing each other around the earth, I would advise you to be on the move, away from your thoughts about life, if you don't want to get sick of them. For the more you think of life the less you like it, that's how it always happens. I, too, have had the same experience. Yes, Falcon, I've lived through it all myself.

"I have been in jail; it was in Galicia, and I had plenty of time to philosophize there. What am I in this world

for? I used to ask myself. I would get these thoughts into my head just to break the monotony,—for it certainly was monotonous there! At such moments my heart was oppressed with longing whenever I looked at the fields through the prison bars. My heart was presesd as in a vise! . . . Yes, Falcon, we live in this world and that is all. Who knows why? Nobody. And it's useless to ask. Live and live fully; keep wandering and look about you, and you will never long for that which you haven't got, never! At that time I could have strangled myself with my girdle. Yes, Falcon, I've been through it all!

"H'm! Once I spoke to a man . . . He was a stern fellow,—one of you, a Russian. He said: 'You ought to live not as you like, but as God has ordained. Only throw yourself at God's feet and He will give you everything that you pray for.' And yet this chap himself wore a ragged suit full of holes. I told him to get a new suit of clothes with his prayers, whereupon he became angry, cursed and drove me away from him. Up to that time he had been preaching forgiveness and love. He should therefore have forgiven me when I offended his pride with my words. There's a teacher for you! They teach you to eat less, and they themselves eat ten times a day. . . ."

He spat into the fire and became silent, filling his pipe once more. The wind had died down to a soft, melancholy wail, the horses neighed in the darkness, and from the camp floated the tender, yet sorrowful tones of a dirge. The singer was the beautiful Nonka, the daughter

of Makar. I recognized the rich and round quality of her voice which always sounded so pathetic, so full of longing and discontent—whether she were singing a song or merely saying "good morning." In her brown lustreless features you could see the smoldering hauteur of a queen and in her dark-brown eyes that were always veiled with a shadow of sadness flashed the conscious power of her charm and the irresistible attractiveness of her beauty, as well as her contempt for everything that was unlike herself.

Makar handed the pipe to me.

"Have a smoke! Doesn't the girl sing well? Don't you think so, hey? How would you like to be loved by a girl like her? You wouldn't? That's fine! You are quite right. Put no trust in women, and keep away from them. To kiss a girl is better and pleasanter than to smoke my pipe . . . But once you have kissed a woman the freedom of your heart is dead. A woman binds you to her with bonds that can neither be seen nor torn asunder. You give your whole soul away and you get nothing in return. Take my advice; beware of women. They are always lying, the snakes. . . 'I love you more than anything else in the world,' she says. And yet, if you but prick her accidentally with a pin, she will tear your heart out. I know! Ye gods, how well I know! If you will listen to me, Falcon, I'll tell you a story. But above all, be on your guard, and you will remain a free bird all your life.

"There was once upon a time a young gypsy, and his name was Zobar, Loyko Zobar. All Hungary and Bohemia and Slavonia and all the country that borders on the sea knew him, for he was a brave lad. There was not a village in the entire land in which there were not at least a dozen people who had sworn an oath to Heaven that they would kill Loyko. And yet he lived. If he ever took a fancy to a horse, he would gallop away with it even if an entire regiment had been set to watch over the beast. H'm! He feared neither God nor man. And even if Satan himself were to array his whole hellish army against him, he would oppose them single-handed, and I haven't the slightest doubt in the world that Satan's jaw would feel the taste of Zobar's mighty fist.

"And every gypsy camp knew him either by sight or by hearsay. He loved only horses, nothing else, and even these he loved only for a while. One gallop and he was done with them. And the money that he got for selling them anybody could have for the asking. He had nothing that he was unwilling to share with others. If you were to ask for his very heart, he would tear it out of his breast and give it to you for the mere pleasure of doing you a favor. That's the kind of a man he was, Falcon!

"Our band was at that time wandering through Bukowina—it was about ten years ago—. Once, in the springtime—I remember it as though it happened yesterday—we were resting; myself, Danila, the soldier who had fought with Kossuth, old Nur and all the others. Radda, Danila's daughter, was with us, too.

"You know my Nonka, don't you? Isn't she a queen of a girl! But Radda must not be compared with her, for that would be too much honor for Nonka! Words cannot describe this Radda. One might, perhaps, express her loveliness by means of the violin, but he alone could do it who knows the violin as he knows his own soul.

"Many a brave young heart did she ruin, ye gods, how many! Once a rich old man beheld her. When his glance fell upon her, he stopped as if paralyzed. He sat upon his mount and gazed at her, trembling as in a fever. He was as handsome as the devil on a holiday, his mantle was embroidered with gold, and whenever the horse stamped with his hoofs, the sabre flashed like lightning at his side. . . The entire sabre was inlaid with precious stones, and the bright blue velvet on his cap was like a piece of sky. . . A mighty nobleman was he! He gazed and gazed upon Radda, and then he said to her: 'Give me a kiss and I will give you a purse full of money in return!' She merely turned away, and that was all. 'Pardon me! Even if I have offended you, you will at least favor me with your smile, won't you?' Thus did he humble his pride, throwing a purse of money at her feet—a great, big purse, brother! But Radda merely kicked it with her foot into the dusty road, and that was all.

"'Aha! Is that the kind of a girl you are?' muttered the rich man, whipping his horse. Only a cloud of dust remained behind.

"And the next day he came again.—'Who is her father?' he cried in a loud voice that resounded throughout the camp. Danila came. "Sell me your daughter, and set your own price!' But Danila replied: 'This is the custom only among gentlemen; they sell everything, from their pigs to their conscience. But I have fought under Kossuth, and I will not sell anything!' The nobleman flew into a rage and grasped the hilt of his sabre, but just at that moment one of us stuck a burning match into the ear of his horse and drove him away together with the rider. . . We broke up our camp and wandered on. We wandered for two days, and yet he overtook us! 'Hey, you folks,' he said, 'before you and before God my conscience is clear. Give me this girl for my wife, and I will share everything with you. I am very rich!'—He was burning with excitement and just as a blade of grass quivers in the tempest, just so did he sway in the saddle.

"'Well, my daughter, speak!' grumbled Danila into his beard.

"'If the daughter of an eagle were to go of her own free will into the nest of a raven, what would she become then?' asked Radda.

"Danila laughed and we laughed with him.

"'Well spoken, little daughter! Have you heard, your Honor? It can't be done! You had better look for a little dove—they are more submissive.'

"And we went on. The nobleman took his cap, threw it upon the ground and galloped away,—he galloped so

fast that the earth quaked. That's the kind of a girl she was, Falcon!

"Yes, and one evening we were sitting and listening. Music floated over the steppe. It was a wonderful music! It set the blood in our veins afire and seemed to call us somewhere. And we, every one of us, felt as though that music awoke in us a vague longing, either to die or else to live as the ruler of the entire world. That's the kind of music it was, Falcon!

"And it came nearer and ever nearer. And suddenly a horse steps out of the darkness, and upon this horse sits a man playing on a fiddle as he approaches us. At the campfire he halts, stops playing and greets us with a smile.

"'Ah, Zobar, it is you!' cried Danila joyously.

"That, then, was Loyko Zobar! The ends of his mustache hung way down over his shoulders, mingling together with his steel-brown locks; his eyes glittered as the bright-stars, and the very sun was mirrored in his laughter, so help me God! He looked as though chiselled out, chiselled out of one piece together with his horse. He sat as though wholly suffused with blood in the light of the glowing logs, and his teeth flashed when he laughed. May I be cursed if I did not fall in love with him immediately, even before he spoke a single word or even noticed that I, too, lived on the face of the earth!

"Yes, Falcon, that's the kind of people we sometimes find in the world! He looks into your eyes and he captures your whole soul. And you are not even ashamed of it; on the contrary, you feel proud of it. In your

dealings with such a man you become better yourself. My friend, the world has not many people like him! And it is only right that this should be so. If there were much good in the world, people would no longer consider it good. That's how it is! But hear what happened after that.

"Radda spoke up: 'You play beautifully, Loyko. Who made you this fiddle with such rich full tones?'

"Loyko laughed. 'I myself have made it! Not out of wood have I made it, but out of the breast of a young girl whom I have loved ardently, and the strings have I fashioned by intertwining her heart-strings. It is still somewhat false, this fiddle, but I know how to master it with the bow in my hand. Do you see?'

"We gypsies, as you know, try from the very outset to becloud the eyes of women in order that they may not set our hearts aflame, but that they should themselves instead be filled with longing for us. Loyko acted likewise. But he struck the wrong party. Radda turned away and said yawning: 'H'm! And yet people have told me that Loyko is wise and clever. The people have lied to me!' Saying this, she went off.

" 'Aha, my beauty! You have sharp teeth!' exclaimed Loyko with flashing eyes as he jumped off his horse. 'Hail, comrades! Here I am!'

" 'Be our welcome guest, O eagle!' replied Danila. After our mutual embraces we conversed for a while and then we all went to sleep. . . We slept soundly. . . The next morning we noticed that Zobar had tied a bandage around

his head. What was the matter? Why, his temple had been wounded by the horse's hoof, he said.

"H'm! We knew what sort of a horse it was and we all snickered into our beards. Danila also smiled. What? Wasn't Loyko worthy of Radda? Surely not that! A girl may be as beautiful as the day, and yet her soul remains mean and cramped, and even if you hang a sackful of gold around her neck, she can never become better than she was in the first place. Yes, siree!

"Thus we lived on and on in that place. Business was good, and Zobar remained with us. That was a comrade for you, Falcon! Wise as an old man, and skilled in everything; he even understood how to read and write Russian and Hungarian. Whenever he began to speak, you felt as though you would like to banish sleep forever just so you might listen to him! And he could play—may a thunderbolt strike me down this very moment if this world has ever seen another man who could play like Zobar. When he first drew his bow across the strings your heart began to go pit-a-pat, at the second chord your heart stopped beating. But he would play on and smile at us. We wanted to laugh and cry at the same time when we listened to his tunes. Now you could hear a long-drawn-out prayer for help that would cut your heart like a knife, with its pathos. And now the instrument reëchoed with the melody of the steppe telling fairy tales, oh such melancholy fairy-tales, to heaven. Then resounded a maiden's tearful syllables, as she was bidding farewell to her heart's beloved. And then rippled forth

the cheerful laughter of her brave lover, calling her into the steppe. And suddenly, heigho! A free and lively tune leapt from his bow like a cataract, and it seemed as if the very sun would begin to dance in the heavens to the rhythm of that tune! That's the kind of music it was, Falcon!

"Every nerve in your body tingled at the sound of that music and you became its utter slave. And if Loyko had exclaimed at such a moment, 'To arms, comrades!' we would all have plunged our knives into the heart of him who might be indicated by Loyko. He could do everything with us, and we loved him, we loved him ardently. Only Radda paid no attention to him. That wouldn't have been so bad, but she even made sport of him. As in a vise she held Zobar's heart imprisoned. Loyko gnashed his teeth and twirled his long mustache. His eyes were blacker than an abyss, and yet now and then they flashed so fiercely that our hearts were filled with trembling. At night he went far into the steppe, did this fearless Loyko, and he let his fiddle wail till the dawning of the day. The fiddle wailed because his freedom was dead. And we lay awake in our camp, thinking, 'What's to be done?' We knew very well that when two rocks roll upon each other it is death to stand between them. That's how it was, Falcon!

"One day we were all sitting together and speaking about our business. Our talk was becoming monotonous and so Danila spoke up: 'Sing us a song, Zobar! Gladden our hearts with a tune!' The latter cast a glance toward

Radda, who lay upon her back not far from us, her face upturned toward the sky, and then he began to draw his bow. Hereupon the fiddle started to talk, as though it really were the heart of a young girl! And Loyko sang:

'Ho! My heart is aflame as I ride,
Through the wastes of the steppe so wide.
Like an arrow flies my steed
Shod with the whirlwind's speed.'

"Radda turned her head, raised herself on her elbow and smiled into Loyko's eyes. His face flamed up like the sunrise.

'Heigho! Let us gallop away
From the night to the gates of the day!
Let us scatter the mantle of mist
Where the hills by the sunrise are kissed.

We will ride with the sun till the night
And spatter the sky with her light;
We will leap into midnight from noon
And rest on the tip of the moon.'

"That's the way he sang; Nobody can sing like that nowadays! Radda, however, merely remarked as though she were spilling water through a sieve: 'I wouldn't fly so high if I were you, Loyko. You're liable to fall down and stick your nose into a puddle, and then your mustache will get dirty. You had better look out!' Loyko glared at her for a moment, but said nothing. Controlling his rage, he continued his song:

'Heigho! And to-morrow will peep
And will find us fast asleep.
And then we will both pass away,
In the flaming sun's red spray.'

"'That's what I call a song!' said Danila.—'Never in my life have I heard such a song. May Satan make a pipe out of me this very minute if I'm not telling the truth!' Old Nur stroked his mustache and shrugged his shoulders. This song of Zobar's had touched the hearts of us all. But Radda was not pleased with it.

"'A fly once buzzed just like this when he tried to imitate the cry of the eagle,' she said. We all felt as though she had just showered us with snow.

"'Perhaps you would like to taste the whip, Radda,' said her father. But Zobar threw his cap on the ground and with flashing eyes exclaimed: 'Stop, Danila! A fiery horse needs a bit of steel! I want your consent to marry your daughter!'

"'Well spoken!' smiled Danila. 'Take her, if only you are willing and able!'

"'Very well,' replied Loyko, and turned to Radda: 'Well, my pretty lass, listen to me and don't be so haughty! I have known many of your sisters, yes, many of them. But not one of them has so fired my heart as you. Ah, Radda, you have imprisoned my soul. . . Well, then, what am I to do about it? Whatever must happen will happen. . . Yes, there isn't a horse in the world who can carry you away from yourself! I ask you to marry me before

God, my honor, your father and all these people. But beware of interfering with my freedom—for I am a free man and I want to live as I choose!' Hereupon, compressing his lips, he approached her. With flashing eyes he stepped forward to take her. . . 'Aha,' we said to ourselves, 'at last Radda has put the bit into the mouth of the steed of the steppe.' But suddenly we saw him throw his hands into the air and fall down flat on his back! . . .

"He fell as though struck with a bullet. How had it happened? It was Radda. She had coiled the whip around his legs drawing it sharply toward herself, whereupon Loyka fell to the ground.

"And then she lay down again and looked smilingly at the sky. We waited to see what Loyko would do. The latter, however, sat on the ground pressing his temples with his hands, as though fearful that his head would burst. Then he rose quietly and went off into the steppe without casting a single glance in our direction. Nur whispered to me, 'Watch him!' And I crept after Zobar into the steppe, into the darkness of the night. That's the way it was, Falcon! . . ."

Makar shook the ashes out of his pipe and filled it anew.

I cuddled up in my cloak and looked into Makar's old face that was blackened by the wind and sun. Sternly and thoughtfully he shook his head, murmuring something I could not hear; his thick gray mustache trembled in the wind which played through his dishevelled hair. He resembled an old oak which, though struck by lightning, still stands tall and mighty in its invincible pride. The

sea and the shore whispered interminably together, and the wind carried their whisperings over the steppe. Nonka was no longer singing and the clouds that now covered the sky made the autumn night even more dark and terrible.

"Loyko walked slowly, step by step, with bowed head and hands hanging limp and lifeless. Coming to the ravine near the river he sat down on a rock and moaned. So piteously did he moan that my heart bled in sympathy. And yet I did not come near him. Words cannot console a man's sufferings, can they? . . . Yes, he sat thus for one hour, two hours, three hours—he sat motionless near the river.

"I lay on the ground at no great distance. The night was bright, the moon threw a silvery glitter over the whole steppe, so that it was possible to see everything.

"Suddenly I saw Radda walking quickly from the gypsy camp toward Loyko. I was happy, oh, so happy! After all, Radda was a most wonderful girl! She approached him, but he did not hear her. She put her hand on his shoulder. Loyko started, took his hands away from his face and raised his head. And you should have seen how he sprang to his feet and grasped the hilt of his knife! 'He will kill the girl!' I said to myself. I was just on the point of running to the camp in order to summon help when I heard these words: 'Throw it away, or else I will blow your brains out! Do you see this?' And Radda pointed a pistol at Zobar's head. That's the devil of a girl

she was, Falcon! 'Now,' thought I, 'they are equally matched. What will happen next, I wonder?'

"'Listen to me!' Radda put the pistol into her belt and continued: 'I have come not to kill you but to make peace. Throw away that knife!' He threw it away and looked at her darkly. It was wonderful, brother! Here stood two creatures looking at each other like beasts of prey, and yet they were both such brave and splendid people. Only the bright moon beheld them, and I. . . Nobody else.

"'Now listen to me, Loyko. I love you!' He merely shrugged his shoulders, as though he were tied hand and foot.

"'I have seen many a lad, but you are braver and handsomer than all the rest. The others would all shave off their mustache at a single glance from my eye, they would all fall at my feet, if I should only ask it. But of what use would it be? With all that they could not please me, and I would only make women out of them. There are very few brave gypsies in the world, very few, Loyko. None of them have I ever loved before, but now I love you. And yet I love my freedom, and this, Loyko, I love more than you. But without you I cannot live, even as you cannot live without me. And therefore I want you to be mine, with your whole heart and soul. Do you hear?'

"He smiled. 'I hear! My heart is glad to hear your words. Speak on!'

"'I have this much to say yet, Loyko: Whatever you do, I will compel you to become mine. And therefore I would advise you to lose no time, for my kisses and em-

braces are awaiting you—and most ardent will they be, these kisses and embraces of mine, Loyko! In the warmth of my arms you will forget your courageous life, and your beautiful songs that give so much joy to the gypsy folk will no longer reëcho in the steppe. . . You will sing only tender love songs to me, your Radda. . . Lose no time, therefore, but do as I say. To-morrow you must submit to me as to a superior officer. You will bow down at my feet, in the presence of the whole camp, and you will kiss my right hand—and then I will become your wife!'

"So that's what the devilish girl wanted. It was amazing. Such things had happened only in olden times, among Montenegrins, but among the gypsies, never. Submission to a woman! Tell me, Falcon, can you imagine anything more ridiculous? Why, you won't be able to do so in a hundred years. No, siree!

"Loyko sprang to his feet and uttered a cry that rang through the whole steppe, as though a bullet had just passed through his breast. Radda trembled, but did not lose her nerve.

" 'Farewell till to-morrow, and to-morrow you will do what I have commanded. Do you hear, Loyko?'

" 'I hear! I will do it!' groaned Zobar, holding his arms out to her. But she turned away from him. He swayed like a tree uprooted by the tempest, and fell to the ground, weeping and laughing hysterically.

"That's the way the beautiful vixen tortured the poor fellow. It was with great difficulty that I brought him to his senses.

"I wonder what good it does to Satan or Beelzebub or any other devil when human beings are plunged in such grief? What pleasure can it give to the Evil One to listen to the heartrending groans of men and women? I wonder whether the philosophers know anything about it? . . .

"I returned to the camp and told everything to the old men. They deliberated for some time and at last decided to wait and see how all this would turn out. And this is what happened: As we were all sitting around the campfire the next evening, Loyko came to us. He looked thoughtful, his features were terribly emaciated and there were black rings under his eyes which he kept fixed on the ground. Without looking at us he said: 'Listen to me, comrades. This night I have searched my heart and I no longer find in it any place for my old freedom. Radda alone now lives in it, and nothing else. Here she is, the exquisitely beautiful Radda, smiling like a queen! She loves her freedom more than she loves me, but I, I love her more than I love my freedom, and I have therefore determined to fall at her feet. Thus has she commanded me to do, in order that you might all see how her loveliness has enslaved the dauntless Loyko Zobar who, before he knew Radda, used to play with women as the vulture plays with ducks. After that, however, she will become my wife, fondling me with her kisses and embraces, so that I shall no longer have any desire to sing to you, or any regrets over the loss of my freedom! Am I right, Radda?'—Raising his eyes, he looked at her sadly. She said nothing in reply, but nodded her head vigorously

and pointed at her feet. And we looked on in sorrow and amazement, not understanding it at all. We felt as though we wanted to go far away, so that we might not see Loyko Zobar falling at a woman's feet, even though this woman was Radda herself. We were overcome with a feeling of shame, pity and sorrow at this sad spectacle.

" 'Well?' said Radda to Zobar.

" 'Ah, do not be so hasty! There's plenty of time for that yet. You will have glory enough to-day!' laughed Loyko. Like the clashing of steel—that's how his laughter sounded.

" 'Well, then, comrades, this is the whole story. What else is there left for me to do? This much. It is necessary for me to find out whether my Radda's heart is really so hard as she has shown it to be. And that's what I am going to find out now. . . Pardon me, my dear comrades!'

"And before we could realize what Zobar was about, Radda was already lying on the ground, and in her breast stuck Loyko's crooked knife up to its very hilt. We all stood as if paralyzed.

But Radda drew the knife out of her heart, threw it aside, pressed a lock of her black hair to the open wound, smiled and spoke up loudly and clearly: 'Farewell, Loyko! I knew that you would act like this!' . . . And with these words on her lips she died.

"Do you understand now what kind of a girl she was, Falcon? What a woman! May I be forever cursed if

she wasn't the daughter of the very devil himself! Yes, siree!

" 'And now, my proud queen, I will fall at your feet!' he cried aloud, did this Loyko, and the whole steppe reëchoed with his words. He threw himself on the ground, pressed his lips to the feet of the dead Radda, and remained as though lifeless himself. We removed our caps and surrounded the two in silence.

"What do you think of such a story, Falcon? . . .

"At last Nur wanted to say: 'We ought to bind him!' But not a hand would have been raised to bind Loyko Zobar, and Nur knew it. Danila, however, picked up the knife that Radda had cast aside and looked at it for a long time. His lips quivered. Radda's blood was still warm upon this knife, and it was so sharp and crooked! Then Danila approached Zobar and plunged the knife into his back, just over the heart. For he was after all the father of Radda, was this old soldier, Danila.

" 'Well done!' said Loyko in a ringing voice, turning toward Danila. And then he sank down at Radda's side and his soul followed hers out of the world.

"And there before our eyes lay Radda, her hand with its black lock of hair pressed to her bosom, her wide open eyes turned toward the sky, and at her feet lay the handsome form of Loyko Zobar. His hair had fallen over his face, and so we could not see his features.

"We stood lost in deep thought. Old Danila's gray mustache trembled and terrible was the look in his dark eyes. He gazed toward the sky, but said not a word. But

the old and feeble Nur threw himself face downward on the ground and wept like a child.

"And there was good cause for weeping, Falcon! Yes, siree! . . .

"Well, then, God be with you, my friend. Keep going straight ahead and do not turn aside. You will only rot away if you stay in one place. That's all, Falcon!"

Makar stopped, put his pipe into his tobacco pouch and threw the folds of his cloak over his breast. The rain was drizzling, the storm increased and the surf pounded against the shore with a loud and hollow growl. One after another the horses came near the dying fire, looked at us with their big, intelligent eyes and stood around us in a big circle.

"Hop, hop, ehoi!" Makar called out to them in a friendly voice; and as he was stroking the neck of his favorite animal with the palm of his hand, he said turning to me: "It is time to sleep!" Covering his head with his cloak he stretched out on the ground and soon fell asleep. But I had no desire to sleep. I gazed through the darkness of the steppe at the roaring ocean, and I could see before me the queenly figure of the proud and lovely Radda. She held her hand with the lock of her black hair tightly pressed against her wound and through her slender brown fingers trickled the blood from her breast, drop by drop, and they fell upon the earth like ruddy stars of fire.

And behind her, close upon her heels, hovered the brave Loyko Zobar. His face was veiled by his thick black hair

behind which his cold big tears flowed in a steady stream. . .

The rain fell faster and the wind sang a sad and solemn dirge to the proud pair—Loyko Zobar and Radda, the daughter of old Danila. And the two shadows whirled silently around each other in the darkness of the night, yet never was the singer, Loyko, able to overtake his proud, beloved Radda. . .

The Fourth Nail

A Gypsy Legend, as Told by Murdo to the Author

WHEN the soldiers were given the person of Asa ben Miriam, whom the world later called Jesus, that they should execute him, for they said he had talked against the Emperor of Rome, two soldiers were sent out to get four nails with which to crucify him on the wooden cross.

For every man that was to be crucified, the soldiers used to get eighty *kreitzer* to buy nails from some blacksmith. And so when these soldiers were given the eighty *kreitzer* with which to buy nails, they first tarried at an inn and spent half of that amount drinking the sweet-sour wine that the Greeks then sold in Jerusalem. It was late in the afternoon when they bethought themselves of the nails, and they had to be back in the barracks by nightfall, for early the following morning was to be the crucifixion of Asa ben Miriam.

So they went out hastily and not altogether sober, and ran to the first blacksmith and said to him loudly, so as to frighten him into doing the work even if there was not enough money to pay for the iron and the labor:

"Man, we want four big nails made right away, to crucify Asa ben Miriam."

The blacksmith was an old man, and he had seen the lovely pale face and the light brown eyes of Asa ben Miriam when he had passed by his shop. A tremor ran through the body of the blacksmith as he stepped out from behind the forge at which he had been working, and he said:

"I will not forge nails to crucify Asa ben Miriam."

Then the soldiers put down the forty *kreitzer* and yelled loudly:

"Here is money to pay for them. Go ahead and make them."

And they held their lances close to the man.

The man raised his arms, stretched his body, looked the soldiers straight in the eyes and said:

"I will not make the nails to crucify Asa ben Miriam."

Then the soldiers ran him through with their lances.

And they went hurriedly to a second blacksmith a little further away. And it was getting on in the afternoon when they arrived there, and they told the blacksmith:

"Make us four nails and we shall pay you forty *kreitzer* for them."

"I can make you four small nails for that price," the man said.

But the soldiers showed him how large they wanted the nails. Then the man shook his head and said:

"I cannot make them for that price."

But there was an ugly light in the soldiers' eyes.

"Well, if it be your will that I lose money on you. And I have a wife and children, too; I will make them."

"Jew," the soldiers bellowed, "make us the nails and stop talking."

They saw that they had frightened the Jew and they wanted to press the matter.

So the Jew went to the forge and began to work on the nails. And then one of the soldiers leaned forward:

"Make them good and strong, Jew, for we have to crucify Asa ben Miriam."

The hand of the Jew remained poised high with the hammer. And the voice of the man whom the soldiers had killed because he was unwilling to forge nails to crucify Jesus with, called out faintly, as if it were only the phantom of a voice:

"Aria, do not make the nails."

Then Aria dropped the hammer beside the forge.

"I cannot make the nails," he said.

"Make them!" the soldiers ordered, though they were frightened themselves, for they too had heard the voice. Night was falling and they had drunk forty *kreitzer* of the eighty they had been given.

"I cannot make them," Aria answered.

"Jew, you said you had a wife and children," they pressed, coming nearer to him with their lances.

"I will not forge the nails to crucify Asa ben Miriam," the Jew answered and stretched himself to his full height.

The soldiers ran him through with their lances.

The sun was low behind the hills and the soldiers were in great haste. So they ran as fast as they could to a third blacksmith, a Syrian. And they went into his shop even while he was getting ready to leave off work for the day. Their lances were still wet with blood when they called to the man:

"Khalil, make us four stout nails, and here are forty *kreitzer* to pay for them. And be quick about it."

The Syrian looked at the bloody lances and forthwith began to blow his bellows; for he knew what to expect if he should refuse. But he had no sooner begun to forge the first piece of iron than faint and trembling the voices of the two blacksmiths who had been killed by the soldiers, called to him not to make the nails. The man cast his hammer aside. And he too was run through with the lances.

The soldiers were terribly frightened. Had they not drunk the other forty *kreitzer* they might have returned to the barracks and told what had happened. As it was they ran out of the gates of Jerusalem, and thought themselves lucky to meet with a gypsy man who had just pitched his tent and set up his anvil; for he was a blacksmith. And so they went up to him and ordered him to forge four nails. And they put the forty *kreitzer* down.

The man put the money in his pocket first and then set to work. The soldiers felt much easier, for they had found a man willing to forge the nails they needed. When the gypsy had made ready the first nail they put it in a bag. And when the gypsy had made another nail they put it in the bag. And when the gypsy had made the third nail they put it in the bag. The gypsy began to forge the fourth nail. The soldiers having become more confident, the wine having worn off its effect on them, told the gypsy:

"With these nails we will crucify Asa ben Miriam."

They had hardly finished speaking when the voices of the three blacksmiths the soldiers had killed that afternoon began to plead with the gypsy. And the voices were unearthly. The soldiers looked at one another. Night was falling. They ran away before the gypsy had finished forging the last nail.

When the soldiers had run away the gypsy was glad that he had put the forty pieces of copper in his pocket before he had started work. Then he finished the fourth nail. Having finished the nail he waited for it to grow cold before he should put it away among his other things. He poured water upon the hot iron but the water sizzled off and the iron remained as hot and red as it had been before.

The gypsy wondered about that and poured some more water upon it. Night was falling, and the nail was glowing as if the iron had suddenly begun to bleed, and the blood was spurting fire. So he put

some more water on it. The water sizzled off and the nail glowed and glowed.

Night had darkened the desert, yet a wide stretch of it was illumined by the glow of that nail. Terrified, trembling, the gypsy packed his tent upon his donkey and fled back into the desert.

At midnight, when the donkey could no longer stand the pace, the gypsy, tired, harassed, pitched his tent again. But there, when he looked about him, was the glowing nail, although he had left it at the gates of Jerusalem not having dared to pick it up.

Being close to a water well the gypsy carried water the rest of the night trying to darken the glow of the nail. He threw sand on it, and water, but it never ceased sizzling and glowing. So he left the nail on the ground and ran further into the desert.

Deep in the desert, near an Arab village, the gypsy set up his tent. When he turned about the glowing nail was there.

And then something happened that pleased the gypsy. An Arab came and asked him to join and patch the iron hoops of a wheel. Quickly the gypsy took the burning, glowing nail and patched with it the broken joint of the iron hoop. Then he put it on the Arab's wheel and saw with his own eyes how the Arab put the wheel back on the axle and drove off in the opposite direction.

The Arab had hardly gone when the gypsy drove away. He drove the whole day without daring to

look around. When his donkey had fallen down from exhaustion he bought himself another donkey and ran further away from the place where he had disposed of the nail.

And after many days, still not daring to look round, afraid to open his eyes when night fell, he reached the city of Damascus. There he set up his forge again.

On the following day a man brought him the hilt of a sword to repair. The gypsy lit his forge and put the hilt down. Then the hilt began to glow as the nail had glowed. There the nail was, as if pasted on to the hilt. And so the gypsy ran away again.

And that nail always appears in the tents of the descendants of the man who forged the nails for the crucifixion of Asa ben Miriam. And when the nail appears the gypsies run. It is why they move from one place to another. It is why Asa ben Miriam was crucified with only three nails, his two feet being drawn together and one nail piercing both of them. The fourth nail wanders about from one end of the earth to the other.

What Men Live By

By Leo Tolstoi

"We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death."—1 "Epistle St. John" iii. 14.

"Whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth."—iii. 17-18.

"Love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."—iv. 7-8.

"No man hath beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abideth in us"—iv. 12.

"God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him."—iv. 16.

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—iv. 20.

A SHOEMAKER named Simon, who had neither house nor land of his own, lived with his wife and children in a peasant's hut, and earned his living by his work. Work was cheap, but bread was dear, and what he earned he spent for food. The man and his wife had but one sheepskin coat between them for winter wear, and even that was torn to tatters, and this was the second year he had been wanting to buy sheep-skins for a new coat. Before winter Simon saved up a little money: a three-rouble note lay hidden in his wife's box, and five roubles and twenty kopeks* were owed him by customers in the village.

So one morning he prepared to go to the village to buy the sheep-skins. He put on over his shirt his wife's

* One hundred kopeks make a rouble. The kopek is worth about half a cent.

wadded nankeen jacket, and over that he put his own cloth coat. He took the three-rouble note in his pocket, cut himself a stick to serve as a staff, and started off after breakfast. "I'll collect the five roubles that are due to me," thought he, "add the three I have got, and that will be enough to buy sheep-skins for the winter coat."

He came to the village and called at a peasant's hut, but the man was not at home. The peasant's wife promised that the money should be paid next week, but she would not pay it herself. Then Simon called on another peasant, but this one swore he had no money, and would only pay twenty kopeks which he owed for a pair of boots Simon had mended. Simon then tried to buy the sheep-skins on credit, but the dealer would not trust him.

"Bring your money," said he, "then you may have your pick of the skins. We know what debt-collecting is like."

So all the business the shoemaker did was to get the twenty kopeks for boots he had mended, and to take a pair of felt boots a peasant gave him to sole with leather.

Simon felt downhearted. He spent the twenty kopeks on vodka, and started homewards without having bought any skins. In the morning he had felt the frost; but now, after drinking the vodka, he felt warm, even without a sheep-skin coat. He trudged along, striking his stick on the frozen earth with one hand, swinging the felt boots with the other, and talking to himself.

I

"I'm quite warm," said he, "though I have no sheep-skin coat. I've had a drop, and it runs through all my veins. I need no sheep-skins. I go along and don't worry about anything. That's the sort of man I am! What do I care? I can live without sheep-skins. I don't need them. My wife will fret, to be sure. And, true enough, it *is* a shame; one works all day long, and then does not get paid. Stop a bit! If you don't bring that money along, sure enough I'll skin you, blessed if I don't. How's that? He pays twenty kopeks at a time! What can I do with twenty kopeks? Drink it—that's all one can do! Hard up, he says he is! So he may be—but what about me? You have a house, and cattle, and everything; I've only what I stand up in! You have corn of your own growing; I have to buy every grain. Do what I will, I must spend three roubles every week for bread alone. I come home and find the bread all used up, and I have to fork out another rouble and a half. So just pay up what you owe, and no nonsense about it!"

By this time he had nearly reached the shrine at the bend of the road. Looking up, he saw something whitish behind the shrine. The daylight was fading, and the shoemaker peered at the thing without being able to make out what it was. "There was no white stone here before. Can it be an ox? It's not like an ox. It has a head like a man, but it's too white; and what could a man be doing there?"

He came closer, so that it was clearly visible. To his surprise it really was a man, alive or dead, sitting naked,

leaning motionless against the shrine. Terror seized the shoemaker, and he thought, "Some one has killed him, stripped him, and left him there. If I meddle I shall surely get into trouble."

So the shoemaker went on. He passed in front of the shrine so that he could not see the man. When he had gone some way, he looked back, and saw that the man was no longer leaning against the shrine, but was moving as if looking towards him. The shoemaker felt more frightened than before, and thought, "Shall I go back to him, or shall I go on? If I go near him something dreadful may happen. Who knows who the fellow is? He has not come here for any good. If I go near him he may jump up and throttle me, and there will be no getting away. Or if not, he'd still be a burden on one's hands. What could I do with a naked man? I couldn't give him my last clothes. Heaven only help me to get away!"

So the shoemaker hurried on, leaving the shrine behind him—when suddenly his conscience smote him, and he stopped in the road.

"What are you doing, Simon?" said he to himself. "The man may be dying of want, and you slip past afraid. Have you grown so rich as to be afraid of robbers? Ah, Simon, shame on you!"

So he turned back and went up to the man.

II

Simon approached the stranger, looked at him, and saw that he was a young man, fit, with no bruises on his body,

only evidently freezing and frightened, and he sat there leaning back without looking up at Simon, as if too faint to lift his eyes. Simon went close to him, and then the man seemed to wake up. Turning his head, he opened his eyes and looked into Simon's face. That one look was enough to make Simon fond of the man. He threw the felt boots on the ground, undid his sash, laid it on the boots, and took off his cloth coat.

"It's not a time for talking," said he. "Come, put this coat on at once!" And Simon took the man by the elbows and helped him to rise. As he stood there, Simon saw that his body was clean and in good condition, his hands and feet shapely, and his face good and kind. He threw his coat over the man's shoulders, but the latter could not find the sleeves. Simon guided his arms into them, and drawing the coat well on, wrapped it closely about him, tying the sash round the man's waist.

Simon even took off his torn cap to put it on the man's head, but then his own head felt cold, and he thought: "I'm quite bald, while he has long curly hair." So he put his cap on his own head again. "It will be better to give him something for his feet," thought he; and he made the man sit down, and helped him to put on the felt boots, saying, "There, friend, now move about and warm yourself. Other matters can be settled later on. Can you walk?

The man stood up and looked kindly at Simon, but could not say a word.

"Why don't you speak?" said Simon. "It's too cold to stay here, we must be getting home. There now, take my stick, and if you're feeling weak, lean on that. Now step out!"

The man started walking, and moved easily, not lagging behind.

As they went along, Simon asked him, "And where do you belong to?"

"I'm not from these parts."

"I thought as much. I know the folks hereabouts. But how did you come to be there by the shrine?"

"I cannot tell."

"Has some one been ill-treating you?"

"No one has ill-treated me. God has punished me."

"Of course God rules all. Still, you'll have to find food and shelter somewhere. Where do you want to go to?"

"It is all the same to me."

Simon was amazed. The man did not look like a rogue, and he spoke gently, but yet he gave no account of himself. Still Simon thought, "Who knows what may have happened?" And he said to the stranger: "Well then, come home with me, and at least warm yourself awhile."

So Simon walked towards his home, and the stranger kept up with him, walking at his side. The wind had risen and Simon felt it cold under his shirt. He was getting over his tipsiness by now, and began to feel the frost. He went along sniffling and wrapping his wife's coat round him, and he thought to himself: "There now—talk about sheep-skins; I went out for sheep-skins and come home

without even a coat to my back, and what is more, I'm bringing a naked man along with me. Matryona won't be pleased!" And when he thought of his wife he felt sad; but when he looked at the stranger and remembered how he had looked up at him at the shrine, his heart was glad.

III

Simon's wife had everything ready early that day. She had cut wood, brought water, fed the children, eaten her own meal, and now she sat thinking. She wondered when she ought to make bread: now or tomorrow? There was still a large piece left.

"If Simon has had some dinner in town," thought she, "and does not eat much for supper, the bread will last out another day."

She weighed the piece of bread in her hand again and again, and thought: "I won't make any more today. We have only enough flour left to bake one batch. We can manage to make this last out till Friday."

So Matryona put away the bread, and sat down at the table to patch her husband's shirt. While she worked she thought how her husband was buying skins for a winter coat.

"If only the dealer does not cheat him. My good man is much too simple; he cheats nobody, but any child can take him in. Eight roubles is a lot of money—he should get a good coat at that price. Not tanned skins, but still a proper winter coat. How difficult it was last winter to get on without a warm coat. I could neither get down to

the river, nor go out anywhere. When he went out he put on all we had, and there was nothing left for me. He did not start very early today, but still it's time he was back. I only hope he has not gone on the spree!"

Hardly had Matryona thought this, when steps were heard on the threshold, and some one entered. Matryona stuck her needle into her work and went out into the passage. There she saw two men: Simon, and with him a man without a hat, and wearing felt boots.

Matryona noticed at once that her husband smelt of spirits. "There now, he has been drinking," thought she. And when she saw that he was coatless, had only her jacket on, brought no parcel, stood there silent, and seemed ashamed, her heart was ready to break with disappointment. "He has drunk the money," thought she, "and has been on the spree with some good-for-nothing fellow whom he has brought home with him."

Matryona let them pass into the hut, followed them in, and saw that the stranger was a young, slight man, wearing her husband's coat. There was no shirt to be seen under it, and he had no hat. Having entered, he stood, neither moving, nor raising his eyes, and Matryona thought: "He must be a bad man—he's afraid."

Matryona frowned, and stood beside the oven looking to see what they would do.

Simon took off his cap and sat down on the bench as if things were all right.

"Come, Matryona; if supper is ready, let us have some."

Matryona muttered something to herself and did not move, but stayed where she was, by the oven. She looked first at the one and then at the other of them, and only shook her head. Simon saw that his wife was annoyed, but tried to pass it off. Pretending not to notice anything, he took the stranger by the arm.

"Sit down, friend," said he, "and let us have some supper."

The stranger sat down on the bench.

"Haven't you cooked anything for us?" said Simon.

Matryona's anger boiled over. "I've cooked, but not for you. It seems to me you have drunk your wits away. You went to buy a sheep-skin coat, but come home without so much as the coat you had on, and bring a naked vagabond home with you. I have no supper for drunkards like you."

"That's enough, Matryona. Don't wag your tongue without reason. You had better ask what sort of man—"

"And you tell me what you've done with the money?"

Simon found the pocket of the jacket, drew out the three-rouble note, and unfolded it.

"Here is the money. Trîfonof did not pay, but promises to pay soon."

Matryona got still more angry; he had bought no sheep-skins, but had put his only coat on some naked fellow and had even brought him to their house.

She snatched up the note from the table, took it to put away in safety, and said: "I have no supper for you. We can't feed all the naked drunkards in the world."

"There now, Matryona, hold your tongue a bit. First hear what a man has to say—"

"Much wisdom I shall hear from a drunken fool. I was right in not wanting to marry you—a drunkard. The linen my mother gave me you drank; and now you've been to buy a coat—and have drunk it, too!"

Simon tried to explain to his wife that he had only spent twenty kopeks; tried to tell how he had found the man—but Matryona would not let him get a word in. She talked nineteen to the dozen, and dragged in things that had happened ten years before.

Matryona talked and talked, and at last she flew at Simon and seized him by the sleeve.

"Give me my jacket. It is the only one I have, and you must needs take it from me and wear it yourself. Give it here, you mangy dog, and may the devil take you."

Simon began to pull off the jacket, and turned a sleeve of it inside out; Matryona seized the jacket and it burst its seams. She snatched it up, threw it over her head and went to the door. She meant to go out, but stopped undecided—she wanted to work off her anger, but she also wanted to learn what sort of a man the stranger was.

IV

Matryona stopped and said: "If he were a good man he would not be naked. Why, he hasn't even a shirt on him. If he were all right, you would say where you came across the fellow."

"That's just what I am trying to tell you," said Simon. "As I came to the shrine I saw him sitting all naked and frozen. It isn't quite the weather to sit about naked! God sent me to him, or he would have perished. What was I to do? How do we know what may have happened to him? So I took him, clothed him, and brought him along. Don't be so angry, Matryona. It is a sin. Remember, we all must die one day."

Angry words rose to Matryona's lips, but she looked at the stranger and was silent. He sat on the edge of the bench, motionless, his hands folded on his knees, his head drooping on his breast, his eyes closed, and his brows knit as if in pain. Matryona was silent, and Simon said: "Matryona, have you no love of God?"

Matryona heard these words, and as she looked at the stranger, suddenly her heart softened towards him. She came back from the door, and going to the oven she got out the supper. Setting a cup on the table, she poured out some *kvas**. Then she brought out the last piece of bread, and set out a knife and spoons.

"Eat, if you want to," said she.

Simon drew the stranger to the table.

"Take your place, young man," said he.

Simon cut the bread, crumbled it into the broth, and they began to eat. Matryona sat at the corner of the table resting her head on her hand and looking at the stranger.

And Matryona was touched with pity for the stranger, and began to feel fond of him. And at once the stranger's

* A non-intoxicating drink usually made from rye-malt and rye-flour.

face lit up; his brows were no longer bent, he raised his eyes and smiled at Matryona.

When they had finished supper, the woman cleared away the things and began questioning the stranger. "Where are you from?" said she.

"I am not from these parts."

"But how did you come to be on the road?"

"I may not tell."

"Did some one rob you?"

"God punished me."

"And you were lying there naked?"

"Yes, naked and freezing. Simon saw me and had pity on me. He took off his coat, put it on me and brought me here. And you have fed me, given me drink, and shown pity on me. God will reward you!"

Matryona rose, took from the window Simon's old shirt she had been patching, and gave it to the stranger. She also brought out a pair of trousers for him.

"There," said she, "I see you have no shirt. Put this on, and lie down where you please, in the loft or on the oven*."

The stranger took off the coat, put on the shirt, and lay down in the loft. Matryona put out the candle, took the coat, and climbed to where her husband lay.

Matryona drew the skirts of the coat over her and lay down, but could not sleep; she could not get the stranger out of her mind.

* The brick oven in a Russian peasant's hut is usually built so as to leave a flat top, large enough to lie on, for those who want to sleep in a warm place.

When she remembered that he had eaten their last piece of bread and that there was none for tomorrow, and thought of the shirt and trousers she had given away, she felt grieved: but when she remembered how he had smiled, her heart was glad.

Long did Matryona lie awake, and she noticed that Simon also was awake—he drew the coat towards him.

"Simon!"

"Well?"

"You have had the last of the bread, and I have not put any to rise. I don't know what we shall do tomorrow. Perhaps I can borrow some of neighbor Martha."

"If we're alive we shall find something to eat."

The woman lay still awhile, and then said, "He seems a good man, but why does he not tell us who he is?"

"I suppose he has his reasons."

"Simon!"

"Well?"

"We give; but why does nobody give us anything?"

Simon did not know what to say; so he only said, "Let us stop talking," and turned over and went to sleep.

V

In the morning Simon awoke. The children were still asleep; his wife had gone to the neighbor's to borrow some bread. The stranger alone was sitting on the bench, dressed in the old shirt and trousers, and looking upwards. His face was brighter than it had been the day before.

Simon said to him, "Well, friend; the belly wants bread, and the naked body clothes. One has to work for a living. What work do you know?"

"I do not know any."

This surprised Simon, but he said, "Men who want to learn can learn anything."

"Men work, and I will work also."

"What is your name?"

"Michael."

"Well, Michael, if you don't wish to talk about yourself, that is your own affair; but you'll have to earn a living for yourself. If you will work as I tell you, I will give you food and shelter."

"May God reward you! I will learn. Show me what to do."

Simon took yarn, put it round his thumb and began to twist it.

"It is easy enough—see!"

Michael watched him, put some yarn round his own thumb in the same way, caught the knack, and twisted the yarn also.

Then Simon showed him how to wax the thread. This also Michael mastered. Next Simon showed him how to twist the bristle in, and how to sew, and this, too, Michael learned at once.

Whatever Simon showed him he understood at once, and after three days he worked as if he had sewn boots all his life. He worked without stopping, and ate little. When work was over he sat silently, looking upwards.

He hardly went into the street, spoke only when necessary, and neither joked nor laughed. They never saw him smile, except that first evening when Matryona gave them supper.

VI

Day by day and week by week the year went round. Michael lived and worked with Simon. His fame spread till people said that no one sewed boots so neatly and strongly as Simon's workman, Michael; and from all the district round people came to Simon for their boots, and he began to be well off.

One winter day, as Simon and Michael sat working, a carriage on sledge-runners, with three horses and with bells, drove up to the hut. They looked out of the window; the carriage stopped at their door, a fine servant jumped down from the box and opened the door. A gentleman in a fur coat got out and walked up to Simon's hut. Up jumped Matryona and opened the door wide. The gentleman stooped to enter the hut, and when he drew himself up again his head nearly reached the ceiling, and he seemed quite to fill his end of the room.

Simon rose, bowed, and looked at the gentleman with astonishment. He had never seen any one like him. Simon himself was lean, Michael was thin, and Matryona was dry as a bone, but this man was like some one from another world: red-faced, burly, with a neck like a bull's, and looking altogether as if he were cast in iron.

The gentleman puffed, threw off his fur coat, sat down on the bench, and said, "Which of you is the master boot-maker?"

"I am, your Excellency," said Simon, coming forward.

Then the gentleman shouted to his lad, "Hey, Fédka, bring the leather!"

The servant ran in, bringing a parcel. The gentleman took the parcel and put it on the table.

"Untie it," said he. The lad untied it.

The gentleman pointed to the leather.

"Look here, shoemaker," said he, "do you see this leather?"

"Yes, your honor."

"But do you know what sort of leather it is?"

Simon felt the leather and said, "It is good leather."

"Good indeed! Why, you fool, you never saw such leather before in your life. It's German, and cost twenty roubles."

Simon was frightened, and said, "Where should I ever see leather like that?"

"Just so! Now, can you make it into boots for me?"

"Yes, your Excellency, I can."

Then the gentleman shouted at him: "You *can,* can you? Well, remember whom you are to make them for, and what the leather is. You must make me boots that will wear for a year, neither losing shape nor coming unsewn. If you can do it, take the leather and cut it up; but if you can't say so. I warn you now if your boots become unsewn or lose shape within a year, I will have you put

in prison. If they don't burst or lose shape for a year, I will pay you ten roubles for your work."

Simon was frightened, and did not know what to say. He glanced at Michael and nudging him with his elbow, whispered: "Shall I take the work?"

Michael nodded his head as if to say, "Yes, take it."

Simon did as Michael advised, and undertook to make boots that would not lose shape or split for a whole year.

Calling his servant, the gentleman told him to pull the boot off his left leg, which he stretched out.

"Take my measure!" said he.

Simon stitched a paper measure seventeen inches long, smoothed it out, knelt down, wiped his hand well on his apron so as not to soil the gentleman's sock, and began to measure. He measured the sole, and round the instep, and began to measure the calf of the leg, but the paper was too short. The calf of the leg was as thick as a beam.

"Mind you don't make it too tight in the leg."

Simon stitched on another strip of paper. The gentleman twitched his toes about in his sock, looking round at those in the hut, and as he did so he noticed Michael.

"Whom have you there?" asked he.

"That is my workman. He will sew the boots."

"Mind," said the gentleman to Michael, "remember to make them so that they will last me a year."

Simon also looked at Michael, and saw that Michael was not looking at the gentleman, but was gazing into the corner behind the gentleman, as if he saw some one there.

Michael looked and looked, and suddenly he smiled, and his face became brighter.

"What are you grinning at, you fool?" thundered the gentleman. "You had better look to it that the boots are ready in time."

"They shall be ready in good time," said Michael.

"Mind it is so," said the gentleman, and he put on his boots and his fur coat, wrapped the latter round him, and went to the door. But he forgot to stoop, and struck his head against the lintel.

He swore and rubbed his head. Then he took his seat in the carriage and drove away.

When he had gone, Simon said: "There's a figure of a man for you! You could not kill him with a mallet. He almost knocked out the lintel, but little harm it did him."

And Matryona said: "Living as he does, how should he not grow strong? Death itself can't touch such a rock as that."

VII

Then Simon said to Michael: "Well, we have taken the work, but we must see we don't get into trouble over it. The leather is dear, and the gentleman hot-tempered. We must make no mistakes. Come, your eye is truer and your hands have become nimbler than mine, so you take this measure and cut out the boots. I will finish off the sewing of the vamps."

Michael did as he was told. He took the leather, spread it out on the table, folded it in two, took a knife and began to cut out.

Matryona came and watched him cutting, and was surprised to see how he was doing it. Matryona was accustomed to seeing boots made, and she looked and saw that Michael was not cutting the leather for boots, but was cutting it round.

She wished to say something, but she thought to herself: "Perhaps I do not understand how gentleman's boots should be made. I suppose Michael knows more about it —and I won't interfere."

When Michael had cut up the leather, he took a thread and began to sew not with two ends, as boots are sewn, but with a single end, as for soft slippers.

Again Matryona wondered, but again she did not interfere. Michael sewed on steadily till noon. Then Simon rose for dinner, looked around, and saw that Michael had made slippers out of the gentleman's leather.

"Ah," groaned Simon, and he thought, "How is it that Michael, who has been with me a whole year and never made a mistake before, should do such a dreadful thing? The gentleman ordered high boots, welted, with whole fronts, and Michael has made soft slippers with single soles, and has wasted the leather. What am I to say to the gentleman? I can never replace leather such as this."

And he said to Michael, "What are you doing, friend? You have ruined me! You know the gentleman ordered high boots, but see what you have made!"

Hardly had he begun to rebuke Michael, when "rat-tat" went the iron ring that hung at the door. Some one was knocking. They looked out of the window; a man had come on horseback, and was fastening his horse. They opened the door, and the servant who had been with the gentleman came in.

"Good day," said he.

"Good day," replied Simon. "What can we do for you?"

"My mistress has sent me about the boots."

"What about the boots?"

"Why, my master no longer needs them. He is dead."

"Is it possible?"

"He did not live to get home after leaving you, but died in the carriage. When we reached home and the servants came to help him alight, he rolled over like a sack. He was dead already, and so stiff that he could hardly be got out of the carriage. My mistress sent me here, saying: 'Tell the bootmaker that the gentleman who ordered boots of him and left the leather for them no longer needs the boots, but that he must quickly make soft slippers for the corpse. Wait till they are ready, and bring them back with you.' That is why I have come."

Michael gathered up the remnants of the leather; rolled them up, took the soft slippers he had made, slapped them together, wiped them down with his apron, and handed them and the roll of leather to the servant, who took them and said: "Good-bye, masters, and good day to you!"

VIII

Another year passed, and another, and Michael was now living his sixth year with Simon. He lived as before. He went nowhere, only spoke when necessary, and had only smiled twice in all those years—once when Matryona gave him food, and a second time when the gentleman was in their hut. Simon was more than pleased with his workman. He never now asked him where he came from, and only feared lest Michael should go away.

They were all at home one day. Matryona was putting iron pots in the oven; the children were running along the benches and looking out of the window; Simon was sewing at one window, and Michael was fastening on a heel at the other.

One of the boys ran along the bench to Michael, leaned on his shoulder, and looked out of the window.

"Look, Uncle Michael! There is a lady with little girls! She seems to be coming here. And one of the girls is lame."

When the boy said that, Michael dropped his work, turned to the window, and looked out into the street.

Simon was surprised. Michael never used to look out into the street, but now he pressed against the window, staring at something. Simon also looked out, and saw that a well-dressed woman was really coming to his hut, leading by the hand two little girls in fur coats and woolen shawls. The girls could hardly be told one from the other, except that one of them was crippled in her left leg and walked with a limp.

The woman stepped into the porch and entered the passage. Feeling about for the entrance she found the latch, which she lifted, and opened the door. She let the two girls go in first, and followed them into the hut.

"Good day, good folk!"

"Pray come in," said Simon. "What can we do for you?"

The woman sat down by the table. The two little girls pressed close to her knees, afraid of the people in the hut.

"I want leather shoes made for these two little girls for spring."

"We can do that. We never have made such small shoes, but we can make them; either welted or turnover shoes, linen lined. My man, Michael, is a master at the work."

Simon glanced at Michael and saw that he had left his work and was sitting with his eyes fixed on the little girls. Simon was surprised. It was true the girls were pretty, with black eyes, plump, and rosy-cheeked, and they wore nice kerchiefs and fur coats, but still Simon could not understand why Michael should look at them like that—just as if he had known them before. He was puzzled, but went on talking with the woman, and arranging the price. Having fixed it, he prepared the measure. The woman lifted the lame girl on to her lap and said: "Take two measures from this little girl. Make one shoe for the lame foot and three for the sound one. They both have the same size feet. They are twins."

Simon took the measure and, speaking of the lame girl, said: "How did it happen to her? She is such a pretty girl. Was she born so?"

"No, her mother crushed her leg."

Then Matryona joined in. She wondered who this woman was, and whose the children were, so she said: "Are not you their mother then?"

"No, my good woman; I am neither their mother nor any relation to them. They were quite strangers to me, but I adopted them."

"They are not your children and yet you are so fond of them?"

"How can I help being fond of them? I fed them both at my own breasts. I had a child of my own, but God took him. I was not so fond of him as I now am of them."

"Then whose children are they?"

IX

The woman, having begun talking, told them the whole story.

"It is about six years since their parents died, both in one week: their father was buried on the Tuesday, and their mother died on the Friday. These orphans were born three days after their father's death, and their mother did not live another day. My husband and I were then living as peasants in the village. We were neighbors of theirs, our yard being next to theirs. Their father was a lonely man; a wood-cutter in the forest. When felling trees one day, they let one fall on him. It fell across his

body and crushed his bowels out. They hardly got him home before his soul went to God; and that same week his wife gave birth to twins—these little girls. She was poor and alone; she had no one, young or old, with her. Alone she gave them birth, and alone she met her death.

"The next morning I went to see her, but when I entered the hut, she, poor thing, was already stark and cold. In dying she had rolled on to this child and crushed her leg. The village folk came to the hut, washed the body, laid her out, made a coffin, and buried her. They were good folk. The babies were left alone. What was to be done with them? I was the only woman there who had a baby at the time. I was nursing my first-born—eight weeks old. So I took them for a time. The peasants came together, and thought and thought what to do with them; and at last they said to me: "For the present, Mary, you had better keep the girls, and later on we will arrange what to do for them." So I nursed the sound one at my breast, but at first I did not feed this crippled one. I did not suppose she would live. But then I thought to myself, why should the poor innocent suffer? I pitied her, and began to feed her. And so I fed my own boy and these two—the three of them—at my own breast. I was young and strong, and had good food, and God gave me so much, milk that at times it even overflowed. I used sometimes to feed two at a time, while the third was waiting. When one had enough I nursed the third. And God so ordered it that these grew up, while my own was buried before he was two years old. And I had no more children,

though we prospered. Now my husband is working for the corn merchant at the mill. The pay is good, and we are well off. But I have no children of my own, and how lonely I should be without these little girls! How can I help loving them! They are the joy of my life!"

She pressed the lame little girl to her with one hand, while with the other she wiped the tears from her cheeks.

And Matryona sighed, and said: "The proverb is true that says, 'One may live without father or mother, but one cannot live without God.'"

So they talked together, when suddenly the whole hut was lighted up as though by summer lightning from the corner where Michael sat. They all looked towards him and saw him sitting, his hands folded on his knees, gazing upwards and smiling.

X

The woman went away with the girls. Michael rose from the bench, put down his work, and took off his apron. Then, bowing low to Simon and his wife, he said: Farewell, masters. God has forgiven me. I ask your forgiveness, too, for anything done amiss."

And they saw that a light shone from Michael. And Simon rose, bowed down to Michael, and said: "I see, Michael, that you are no common man, and I can neither keep you nor question you. Only tell me this: how is it that when I found you and brought you home, you were gloomy, and when my wife gave you food you smiled at her and became brighter? Then when the gentleman came

to order the boots, you smiled again and became brighter still? And now, when this woman brought the little girls, you smiled a third time, and have become as bright as day? Tell me, Michael, why does your face shine so, and why did you smile those three times?"

And Michael answered: "Light shines from me because I have been punished, but now God has pardoned me. And I smiled three times, because God sent me to learn three truths, and I have learned them. One I learned when your wife pitied me, and that is why I smiled the first time. The second I learned when the rich man ordered the boots, and then I smiled again. And now, when I saw those little girls, I learn the third and last truth, and I smiled the third time."

And Simon said, "Tell me, Michael, what did God punish you for? and what were the three truths? that I, too, may know them."

And Michael answered: "God punished me for disobeying Him. I was an angel in heaven and disobeyed God. God sent me to fetch a woman's soul. I flew to earth, and saw a sick woman lying alone, who had just given birth to twin girls. They moved feebly at their mother's side, but she could not lift them to her breast. When she saw me, she understood that God had sent me for her soul, and she wept and said: 'Angel of God! My husband has just been buried, killed by a falling tree. I have neither sister, nor aunt, nor mother: no one to care for my orphans. Do not take my soul! Let me nurse my babes, feed them, and set them on their feet before I die.

Children cannot live without father or mother.' And I hearkened to her. I placed one child at her breast and gave the other into her arms, and returned to the Lord in heaven. I flew to the Lord, and said: 'I could not take the soul of the mother. Her husband was killed by a tree; the woman has twins, and prays that her soul may not be taken. She says: "Let me nurse and feed my children, and set them on their feet. Children cannot live without father or mother." I have not taken her soul.' And God said: 'Go—take the mother's soul, and learn three truths: Learn *What dwells in man, What is not given to man,* and *What men live by.* When thou hast learnt these things, thou shalt return to heaven.' So I flew again to earth and took the mother's soul. The babes dropped from her breasts. Her body rolled over on the bed and crushed one babe, twisting its leg. I rose above the village, wishing to take her soul to God; but a wind seized me, and my wings drooped and dropped off. Her soul rose alone to God, while I fell to earth by the roadside."

XI

And Simon and Matryona understood who it was that had lived with them, and whom they had clothed and fed. And they wept with awe and with joy. And the angel said: "I was alone in the field, naked. I had never known human needs, cold and hunger, till I became a man. I was famished, frozen, and did not know what to do. I saw, near the field I was in, a shrine built for God, and I went

to it hoping to find shelter. But the shrine was locked, and I could not enter. So I sat down behind the shrine to shelter myself at least from the wind. Evening drew on. I was hungry, frozen, and in pain. Suddenly I heard a man coming along the road. He carried a pair of boots, and was talking to himself. For the first time since I became a man I saw the mortal face of a man, and his face seemed terrible to me and I turned from it. And I heard the man talking to himself of how to cover his body from the cold in winter, and how to feed wife and children. And I thought: "I am perishing of cold and hunger, and here is a man thinking only of how to clothe himself and his wife, and how to get bread for themselves. He cannot help me. When the man saw me he frowned and became still more terrible, and passed me by on the other side. I despaired; but suddenly I heard him coming back. I looked up, and did not recognize the same man; before, I had seen death in his face; but now he was alive, and I recognized in him the presence of God. He came up to me, clothed me, took me with him, and brought me to his home. I entered the house; a woman came to meet us and began to speak. The woman was still more terrible than the man had been; the spirit of death came from her mouth; I could not breathe for the stench of death that spread around her. She wished to drive me out into the cold, and I knew that if she did so she would die. Suddenly her husband spoke to her of God, and the woman changed at once. And when she brought me food and looked at me, I glanced at her and saw that death no

longer dwelt in her; she had become alive, and in her, too, I saw God.

"Then I remembered the first lesson God had set me: *'Learn what dwells in man.'* And I understood that in man dwells Love! I was glad that God had already begun to show me what He had promised, and I smiled for the first time. But I had not yet learned all. I did not yet know *What is not given to man,* and *What men live by.*

"I lived with you, and a year passed. A man came to order boots that should wear for a year without losing shape or cracking. I looked at him, and suddenly, behind his shoulder, I saw my comrade—the angel of death. None but me saw that angel; but I knew him, and knew that before the sun set he would take that rich man's soul. And I thought to myself, 'The man is making preparations for a year, and does not know that he will die before evening.' And I remembered God's second saying, *'Learn what is not given to man.'*

"What dwells in man I already knew. Now I learned what is not given him. It is not given to man to know his own needs. And I smiled for the second time. I was glad to have seen my comrade angel—glad also that God had revealed to me the second saying.

"But I still did not know all. I did not know *What men live by.* And I lived on, waiting till God should reveal to me the last lesson. In the sixth year came the girl-twins with the woman: and I recognized the girls, and heard how they had been kept alive. Having heard the story, I thought, 'Their mother besought me for the children's

sake, and I believed her when she said that children cannot live without father or mother; but a stranger has nursed them, and has brought them up.' And when the woman showed her love for the children that were not her own, and wept over them, I saw in her the living God, and understood *What men live by.* And I knew that God had revealed to me the last lesson, and had forgiven my sin. And then I smiled for the third time."

XII

And the angel's body was bared, and he was clothed in light so that eye could not look on him; and his voice grew louder, as though it came not from him but from heaven above. And the angel said:

"I have learned that all men live not by care for themselves, but by love.

"It was not given to the mother to know what her children needed for their life. Nor was it given to the rich man to know what he himself needed. Nor is it given to any man to know whether, when evening comes, he will need boots for his body or slippers for his corpse.

"I remained alive when I was a man, not by care of myself, but because love was present in a passer-by, and because he and his wife pitied and loved me. The orphans remained alive, not because of their mother's care, but because there was love in the heart of a woman, a stranger to them, who pitied and loved them. And all men live not by the thought they spend on their own welfare, but because love exists in man.

"I knew before that God gave life to men and desires that they should live; now I understood more than that.

"I understood that God does not wish men to live apart, and therefore he does not reveal to them what each one needs for himself; but he wishes them to live united, and therefore reveals to each of them what is necessary for all.

"I have now understood that though it seems to men that they live by care for themselves, in truth it is love alone by which they live. He who has love, is in God, and God is in him, for God is love."

And the angel sang praise to God, so that the hut trembled at his voice. The roof opened, and a column of fire rose from earth to heaven. Simon and his wife and children fell to the ground. Wings appeared upon the angel's shoulders, and he rose into the heavens.

And when Simon came to himself the hut stood as before, and there was no one in it but his own family.

Life of Ma Parker

By Katherine Mansfield

WHEN the literary gentleman, whose flat old Ma Parker cleaned every Tuesday, opened the door to her that morning, he asked after her grandson. Ma Parker stood on the doormat inside the dark little hall, and she stretched out her hand to help her gentleman shut the door before she replied. "We buried 'im yesterday, sir,'" she said quietly.

"Oh, dear me! I'm sorry to hear that," said the literary gentleman in a shocked tone. He was in the middle of his breakfast. He wore a very shabby dressing-gown and carried a crumpled newspaper in one hand. But he felt awkward. He could hardly go back to the warm sitting-room without saying something—something more. Then because these people set such store by funerals he said kindly, "I hope the funeral went off all right."

"Beg parding, sir?" said old Ma Parker huskily.

Poor old bird! She did look dashed. "I hope the funeral was a—a—success," said he. Ma Parker gave no answer. She bent her head and hobbled off to the kitchen, clasping the old fish bag that held her cleaning things and an apron and a pair of felt shoes. The literary gentleman raised his eyebrows and went back to his breakfast.

"Overcome, I suppose," he said aloud, helping himself to the marmalade.

Ma Parker drew the two jetty spears out of her toque and hung it behind the door. She unhooked her worn jacket and hung that up too. Then she tied her apron and sat down to take off her boots. To take off her boots or to put them on was an agony to her, but it had been an agony for years. In fact, she was so accustomed to the pain that her face was drawn and screwed up ready for the twinge before she'd so much as untied the laces. That over, she sat back with a sigh and softly rubbed her knees. . . .

"Gran! Gran!" Her little grandson stood on her lap in his button boots. He'd just come in from playing in the street.

"Look what a state you've made your gran's skirt into—you wicked boy!"

But he put his arms round her neck and rubbed his cheek against hers.

"Gran, gi' us a penny!" he coaxed.

"Be off with you; Gran ain't got no pennies."

"Yes, you 'ave."

"No, I ain't."

"Yes, you 'ave. Gi' us one!"

Already she was feeling for the old, squashed, black leather purse.

"Well, what'll you give your gran?"

He gave a shy little laugh and pressed closer. She felt his eyelid quivering against her cheek. "I ain't got nothing," he murmured. . . .

The old woman sprang up, seized the iron kettle off the gas stove and took it over to the sink. The noise of the water drumming in the kettle deadened her pain, it seemed. She filled the pail, too, and the washing-up bowl.

It would take a whole book to describe the state of that kitchen. During the week the literary gentleman "did" for himself. That is to say, he emptied the tea leaves now and again into a jam jar set aside for that purpose, and if he ran out of clean forks he wiped over one or two on the roller towel. Otherwise, as he explained to his friends, his "system" was quite simple, and he couldn't understand why people made all this fuss about housekeeping.

"You simply dirty everything you've got, get a hag in once a week to clean up, and the thing's done."

The result looked like a gigantic dustbin. Even the floor was littered with toast crusts, envelopes, cigarette ends. But Ma Parker bore him no grudge. She pitied the poor young gentleman for having no one to look after him. Out of the smudgy little window you could see an immense expanse of sad-looking sky, and whenever there were clouds they looked very worn, old clouds, frayed at the edges, with holes in them, or dark stains like tea.

While the water was heating, Ma Parker began sweeping the floor. "Yes," she thought, as the broom knocked, "what with one thing and another I've had my share. I've had a hard life."

Even the neighbours said that of her. Many a time, hobbling home with her fish bag she heard them, waiting at the corner, or leaning over the area railings, say among themselves, "She's had a hard life, has Ma Parker." And it was so true she wasn't in the least proud of it. It was just as if you were to say she lived in the basement-back at Number 27. A hard life! . . .

At sixteen she'd left Stratford and come up to London as kitching-maid. Yes, she was born in Stratford-on-Avon. Shakespeare, sir? No, people were always arsking her about him. But she'd never heard his name until she saw it on the theatres.

Nothing remained of Stratford except that "sitting in the fire-place of a evening you could see the stars through the chimley," and "Mother always 'ad 'er side of bacon 'hanging from the ceiling." And there was something—a bush, there was—at the front door, that smelt ever so nice. But the bush was very vague. She'd only remembered it once or twice in the hospital, when she'd been taken bad.

That was a dreadful place—her first place. She was never allowed out. She never went upstairs except for prayers morning and evening. It was a fair cellar.

And the cook was a cruel woman. She used to snatch away her letters from home before she'd read them, and throw them in the range because they made her dreamy. . . . And the beedles! Would you believe it?—until she came to London she'd never seen a black beedle. Here Ma always gave a little laugh, as though—not to have seen a black beedle! Well! It was as if to say you'd never seen your own feet.

When that family was sold up she went as "help" to a doctor's house, and after two years there, on the run from morning till night, she married her husband. He was a baker.

"A baker, Mrs. Parker!" the literary gentleman would say. For occasionally he laid aside his tomes and lent an ear, at least, to this product called Life. "It must be rather nice to be married to a baker!"

Mrs. Parker didn't look so sure.

"Such a clean trade," said the gentleman.

Mrs. Parker didn't look convinced.

"And didn't you like handing the new loaves to the customers?"

"Well, sir," said Mrs. Parker, "I wasn't in the shop above a great deal. We had thirteen little ones and buried seven of them. If it wasn't the 'ospital it was the infirmary, you might say!"

"You might, *indeed,* Mrs. Parker!" said the gentleman, shuddering, and taking up his pen again.

Yes, seven had gone, and while the six were still small her husband was taken ill with consumption.

It was flour on the lungs, the doctor told her at the time. . . . Her husband sat up in bed with his shirt pulled over his head, and the doctor's finger drew a circle on his back.

"Now, if we were to cut him open *here*, Mrs. Parker," said the doctor, "you'd find his lungs chock-a-block with white powder. Breathe, my good fellow!" And Mrs. Parker never knew for certain whether she saw or whether she fancied she saw a great fan of white dust come out of her poor dead husband's lips. . . .

But the struggle she'd had to bring up those six little children and keep herself to herself. Terrible it had been! Then, just when they were old enough to go to school her husband's sister came to stop with them to help things along, and she hadn't been there more than two months when she fell down a flight of steps and hurt her spine. And for five years Ma Parker had another baby—and such a one for crying! —to look after. Then young Maudie went wrong and took her sister Alice with her; the two boys emigrimated, and young Jim went to India with the army, and Ethel, the youngest, married a good-for-nothing little waiter who died of ulcers the year little Lennie was born. And now little Lennie—my grandson. . . .

The piles of dirty cups, dirty dishes, were washed and dried. The ink-black knives were cleaned with a piece of potato and finished off with a piece of cork.

The table was scrubbed, and the dresser and the sink that had sardine tails swimming in it. . . .

He'd never been a strong child—never from the first. He'd been one of those fair babies that everybody took for a girl. Silvery fair curls he had, blue eyes, and a little freckle like a diamond on one side of his nose. The trouble she and Ethel had had to rear that child! The things out of the newspapers they tried him with! Every Sunday morning Ethel would read aloud while Ma Parker did her washing.

"Dear Sir,—Just a line to let you know my little Myrtil was laid out for dead. . . . After four bottils . . . gained 8 lbs. in 9 weeks, *and is still putting it on.*"

And then the egg-cup of ink would come off the dresser and the letter would be written, and Ma would buy a postal order on her way to work next morning. But it was no use. Nothing made little Lennie put it on. Taking him to the cemetery, even, never gave him a colour; a nice shake-up in the bus never improved his appetite.

But he was gran's boy from the first. . . .

"Whose boy are you?" said old Ma Parker, straightening up from the stove and going over to the smudgy window. And a little voice, so warm, so close, it half stifled her—it seemed to be in her breast under her heart—laughed out, and said, "I'm gran's boy!"

At that moment there was a sound of steps, and the literary gentleman appeared, dressed for walking.

"Oh, Mrs. Parker, I'm going out."

"Very good, sir."

"And you'll find your half-crown in the tray of the inkstand."

"Thank you, sir."

"Oh, by the way, Mrs. Parker," said the literary gentleman quickly, "you didn't throw away any cocoa last time you were here—did you?"

"No, sir."

"*Very* strange. I could have sworn I left a teaspoonful of cocoa in the tin." He broke off. He said softly and firmly, "You'll always tell me when you throw things away—won't you, Mrs. Parker?" And he walked off very well pleased with himself, convinced, in fact, he'd shown Mrs. Parker that under his apparent carelessness he was as vigilant as a woman.

The door banged. She took her brushes and cloths into the bedroom. But when she began to make the bed, smoothing, tucking, patting, the thought of little Lennie was unbearable. Why did he have to suffer so? That's what she couldn't understand. Why should a little angel child have to arsk for his breath and fight for it? There was no sense in making a child suffer like that.

. . . From Lennie's little box of a chest there came a sound as though something was boiling. There was a great lump of something bubbling in his chest that he couldn't get rid of. When he coughed the sweat sprang out on his head; his eyes bulged, his

hands waved, and the great lump bubbled as a potato knocks in a saucepan. But what was more awful than all was when he didn't cough he sat against the pillow and never spoke or answered, or even made as if he heard. Only he looked offended.

"It's not your poor old gran's doing it, my lovey," said old Ma Parker, patting back the damp hair from his little scarlet ears. But Lennie moved his head and edged away. Dreadfully offended with her he looked —and solemn. He bent his head and looked at her sideways as though he couldn't have believed it of his gran.

But at the last . . . Ma Parker threw the counterpane over the bed. No, she simply couldn't think about it. It was too much—she'd had too much in her life to bear. She'd borne it up till now, she'd kept herself to herself, and never once had she been seen to cry. Never by a living soul. Not even her own children had seen Ma break down. She'd kept a proud face always. But now! Lennie gone—what had she? She had nothing. He was all she'd got from life, and now he was took too. Why must it all have happened to me? she wondered. "What have I done?" said old Ma Parker. "What have I done?"

As she said those words she suddenly let fall her brush. She found herself in the kitchen. Her misery was so terrible that she pinned on her hat, put on her jacket and walked out of the flat like a person in a dream. She did not know what she was doing. She

was like a person so dazed by the horror of what has happened that he walks away—anywhere, as though by walking away he could escape. . . .

It was cold in the street. There was a wind like ice. People went flitting by, very fast; the men walked like scissors; the women trod like cats. And nobody knew—nobody cared. Even if she broke down, if at last, after all these years, she were to cry, she'd find herself in the lock-up as like as not.

But at the thought of crying it was as though little Lennie leapt in his gran's arms. Ah, that's what she wants to do, my dove. Gran wants to cry. If she could only cry now, cry for a long time, over everything, beginning with her first place and the cruel cook, going on to the doctor's, and then the seven little ones, death of her husband, the children's leaving her, and all the years of misery that led up to Lennie. But to have a proper cry over all these things would take a long time. All the same, the time for it had come. She must do it. She couldn't put it off any longer; she couldn't wait any more. . . . Where could she go?

"She's had a hard life, has Ma Parker." Yes, a hard life, indeed! Her chin began to tremble; there was no time to lose. But where? Where?

She couldn't go home; Ethel was there. It would frighten Ethel out of her life. She couldn't sit on a bench anywhere; people would come arsking her ques-

tions. She couldn't possibly go back to the gentleman's flat; she had no right to cry in strangers' houses. If she sat on some steps a policeman would speak to her.

Oh, wasn't there anywhere where she could hide and keep herself to herself and stay as long as she liked, not disturbing anybody, and nobody worrying her? Wasn't there anywhere in the world where she could have her cry out—at last?

Ma Parker stood, looking up and down. The icy wind blew out her apron into a balloon. And now it began to rain. There was nowhere.

Madame Tellier's Establishment

By Guy de Maupassant

THEY used to go there every evening at about eleven o'clock just as they went to the café. Six or eight of them used to meet there; they were always the same set, not fast men, but respectable citizens, and young men of the town, and they used to drink their Chartreuse, and tease the girls, or else they would talk seriously with Madame, whom everybody respected, and then they used to go home before twelve o'clock. The younger men would sometimes stay the night.

It was a small, homely kind of house, painted yellow, at the corner of a street behind Saint Étienne's church, and from the windows one could see the docks, full of ships which were being unloaded, the great salt marsh, called "La Retenue," and behind, the old, gray chapel, dedicated to the Virgin, on the hill.

Madame, who came of a respectable family of peasant proprietors in the department of the Eure, had taken up that profession, just as she would have become a milliner or dressmaker. The prejudice against prostitution, which is so violent and deeply rooted in large towns, does not exist in the country places in Normandy. The peasant says:

"It is a paying business," and he sends his daughter to keep a harem of fast girls, just as he would send her to keep a girls' school.

She had inherited the house from an old uncle, to whom it had belonged. Monsieur and Madame, who had formerly been innkeepers near Yvetot, had immediately sold their house, as they thought that the business at Fécamp was more profitable, and they arrived one fine morning to assume the direction of the enterprise, which was declining on account of the absence of the owners. They were good people enough in their way, and soon made themselves liked by their staff and their neighbours.

Monsieur died of apoplexy two years later, for as his new profession kept him in idleness and without any exercise, he had grown excessively stout, and his health had suffered. Since she had been a widow, all the frequenters of the establishment had wanted her; but people said that personally she was quite virtuous, and even the girls in the house could not discover anything against her. She was tall, stout and affable, and her complexion, which had become pale in the dimness of her house, the shutters of which were scarcely ever opened, shone as if it had been varnished. She had a fringe of curly, false hair, which gave her a juvenile look, that contrasted strongly with the ripeness of her figure. She was always smiling and cheerful, and was fond of a joke, but there was a shade of reserve about her, which her new occupation had not quite made her

lose. Coarse words always shocked her, and when any young fellow who had been badly brought up called her establishment by its right name, she was angry and disgusted.

In a word, she had a refined mind, and although she treated her women as friends, yet she very frequently used to say that "she and they were not made of the same stuff."

Sometimes during the week, she would hire a carriage and take some of her girls into the country, where they used to enjoy themselves on the grass by the side of the little river. They were like a lot of girls let out from a school, and used to run races, and play childish games. They had a cold dinner on the grass, and drank cider, and went home at night with a delicious feeling of fatigue, and in the carriage they kissed Madame as their kind mother, who was full of goodness and complaisance.

The house had two entrances. At the corner there was a sort of low café, which sailors and the lower orders frequented at night, and she had two girls whose special duty it was to attend to that part of the business. With the assistance of the waiter, whose name was Frédéric, and who was a short, light-haired, beardless fellow, as strong as a horse, they set the half bottles of wine and the jugs of beer on the shaky marble tables, and then, sitting astride on the customers' knees, they urged them to drink.

The three other girls (there were only five of them) formed a kind of aristocracy, and were reserved for the company on the first floor, unless they were wanted downstairs, and there was nobody on the first floor. The Jupiter room, where the better classes used to meet, was papered in blue, and embellished with a large drawing representing Leda stretched out under the swan. That room was reached by a winding staircase, which ended at a narrow door opening on to the street, and above it, all night long a little lamp burned, behind wire bars, such as one still sees in some towns, at the foot of some shrine of a saint.

The house, which was old and damp, rather smelled of mildew. At times there was an odour of Eau de Cologne in the passages, or a half open door downstairs admitted the noise of the common men sitting and drinking downstairs, to the first floor, much to the disgust of the gentlemen who were there. Madame, who was familiar with those of her customers with whom she was on friendly terms, never left the drawing-room, and took much interest in what was going on in the town, and they regularly told her all the news. Her serious conversation was a change from the ceaseless chatter of the three women; it was a rest from the obscene jokes of those stout individuals who every evening indulged in the common-place debauchery of drinking a glass of liquor in company with prostitutes.

The names of the girls on the first floor were Fernande, Raphaële, and Rosa la Rosse. As the staff was limited, Madame had endeavoured that each member of it should be a pattern, an epitome of the feminine type, so that every customer might find as nearly as possible the realization of his ideal. Fernande represented the handsome blonde; she was very tall, rather fat, and lazy; a country girl, who could not get rid of her freckles, and whose short, light, almost colourless, tow-like hair, which was like combed-out flax, barely covered her head.

Raphaële, who came from Marseilles, a regular seaport street-walker, played the indispensable part of the handsome Jewess, and was thin, with high cheek bones, which were covered with rouge, and her black hair, which was always covered with pomade, fell in curls on her forehead. Her eyes would have been handsome, if the right one had not had a speck in it. Her Roman nose came down over a square jaw, where two false upper teeth contrasted strangely with the bad colour of the rest.

Rosa la Rosse was a little roll of fat, nearly all stomach, with very short legs, and from morning till night she sang songs, which were alternately indecent or sentimental, in a harsh voice, told silly, interminable tales, and only stopped talking in order to eat, and left off eating in order to talk; she was never still, and was active as a squirrel, in spite of her fat, and of her short legs; and her laugh, which was a

torrent of shrill cries, resounded here and there, ceaselessly, in a bedroom, in the attic, in the café, everywhere, and about nothing.

The two women on the ground floor, Louise, who was nicknamed Cocote, and Flora, whom they called Balançoire, because she limped a little, looked like kitchen-maids dressed up for the carnival. The former always dressed as Liberty, with a tri-coloured sash, and the other as a Spanish woman, with a string of copper coins, which jingled at every step she took, in her carroty hair. They were like all other women of the lower orders, neither uglier nor better looking than they usually are. They looked just like servants at an inn, and they were generally called the two Pumps.

A jealous peace, which was, however, very rarely disturbed, reigned among these five women, thanks to Madame's conciliatory wisdom, and to her constant good humour, and the establishment, which was the only one of the kind in the little town, was very much frequented. Madame had succeeded in giving it such a respectable appearance, she was so amiable and obliging to everybody, her good heart was so well known, that she was treated with a certain amount of consideration. The regular customers went out of their way to be nice to her, and were delighted when she was especially friendly towards them, and when they met during the day, they would say: "Until this evening, you know where," just as men say: "At the

café, after dinner." In a word, Madame Tellier's house was somewhere to go to, and they very rarely missed their daily meetings there.

One evening, towards the end of May, the first arrival, Monsieur Poulin, who was a timber merchant, and had been mayor, found the door shut. The little lantern behind the grating was not alight; there was not a sound in the house; everything seemed dead. He knocked, gently at first, but then more loudly, but nobody answered the door. Then he went slowly up the street, and when he got to the market place, he met Monsieur Duvert, the shipbuilder, who was going to the same place, so they went back together, but did not meet with any better success. But suddenly they heard a loud noise close to them, and on going round the house, they saw a number of English and French sailors, who were hammering at the closed shutters of the café with their fists.

The two gentlemen immediately made their escape, for fear of being compromised, but a low "Pst" stopped them; it was Monsieur Tournevau, the fish curer, who had recognized them, and was trying to attract their attention. They told him what had happened, and he was all the more vexed at it, as he, a married man, and father of a family, only went there on Saturdays, *securitatis causa,* as he said, alluding to a measure of sanitary policy, which his friend Doctor Borde had advised him to observe. That was his

regular evening, and now he should be deprived of it for the whole week.

The three men went as far as the quay together, and on the way they met young Monsieur Philippe, the banker's son, who frequented the place regularly, and Monsieur Pinipesse, the Collector of Taxes, and they all returned together by the street known as "the Ghetto," to make a last attempt. But the exasperated sailors were besieging the house, throwing stones at the shutters, and shouting, and the five first-floor customers went away as quickly as possible, and walked aimlessly about the streets.

Presently they met Monsieur Dupuis, the insurance agent, and then Monsieur Vasse, the Judge of the Tribunal of Commerce, and they took a long walk, going to the pier first of all, where they sat down in a row on the granite parapet, and watched the waves breaking. The foam on the crest of the waves gleamed a luminous white in the shadows, disappearing almost immediately, and the monotonous noise of the sea breaking on the rocks was prolonged through the darkness along the rocky shore. When the sad promenaders had sat there for some time, Monsieur Tournevau said:

"This is not very amusing!"

"Decidedly not," Monsieur Pinipesse replied, and they started off again slowly.

After going through the street, which is called Sous-le-Bois, at the foot of the hill, they returned over the

wooden bridge which crosses the Retenue, passed close to the railway, and came out again on to the market place, when suddenly a quarrel arose between Monsieur Pinipesse, the Collector of Taxes, and Monsieur Tournevau, about an edible fungus which one of them declared he had found in the neighbourhood.

As they were out of temper already from sheer boredom, they would very probably have come to blows, if the others had not interfered. Monsieur Pinipesse went off furious, and soon another altercation arose between the ex-mayor, Monsieur Poulin, and Monsieur Dupuis, the insurance agent, on the subject of the tax collector's salary, and the profits which he might make. Insulting remarks were freely passing between them, when a torrent of formidable cries was heard, and the body of sailors, who were tired of waiting so long outside a closed house, came into the square. They were walking arm-in-arm, two and two, and formed a long procession, and were shouting furiously. The landsmen went and hid themselves under a gateway, and the yelling crew disappeared in the direction of the abbey. For a long time they still heard the noise, which diminished like a storm in the distance, and then silence was restored, and Monsieur Poulin and Monsieur Dupuis, who were enraged with each other, went in different directions, without wishing each other good-bye.

The other four set off again, and instinctively went in the direction of Madame Tellier's establishment

which was still closed, silent, impenetrable. A quiet, but obstinate, drunken man was knocking at the door of the café, and then stopped and called Frédéric, the waiter, in a low voice, but finding that he got no answer, he sat down on the doorstep, and waited the course of events.

The others were just going to retire, when the noisy band of sailors reappeared at the end of the street. The French sailors were shouting the *Marseillaise,* and the Englishmen, *Rule Britannia.* There was a general lurching against the wall, and then the drunken brutes went on their way towards the quay, where a fight broke out between the two nations, in the course of which an Englishman had his arm broken, and a Frenchman his nose split.

The drunken man, who had stopped outside the door, was crying by that time, as drunken men and children cry, when they are vexed, and the others went away. By degrees, calm was restored in the noisy town; here and there, at moments, the distant sound of voices could be heard, and then died away in the distance.

One man, only, was still wandering about, Monsieur Tournevau, the fish curer, who was vexed at having to wait until the next Saturday, and he hoped for something to turn up, he did not know what; but he was exasperated at the police for thus allowing an establishment of such public utility, which they had under their control, to be closed.

He went back to it, examining the walls, and trying to find out the reason, and on the shutter he saw a notice stuck up, so he struck a wax vesta, and read the following in a large, uneven hand: "Closed on account of Confirmation."

Then he went away, as he saw it was useless to remain, and left the drunken man lying on the pavement fast asleep, outside that inhospitable door.

The next day, all the regular customers, one after the other, found some reason for going through the street with a bundle of papers under their arm, to keep them in countenance, and with a furtive glance they all read that mysterious notice:

Closed on account of Confirmation.

PART II

The fact is, Madame had a brother, who was a carpenter in their native place, Virville in the Department of Eure. When Madame had still kept the inn at Yvetot, she had stood godmother to that brother's daughter, who had received the name of Constance, Constance Rivet; she herself being a Rivet on her father's side. The carpenter, who knew that his sister was in a good position, did not lose sight of her, although they did not meet often, for they were both kept at home by their occupations, and lived a long way from each other. But as the girl was twelve years old, and going to be confirmed, he seized that opportunity of coming together, and wrote to his sister that

he was counting on her for the ceremony. Their old parents were dead, and as she could not well refuse, she accepted the invitation. Her brother, whose name was Joseph, hoped that by dint of showing his sister attentions, she might be induced to make her will in the girl's favour, as she had no children of her own.

His sister's occupation did not trouble his scruples in the least, and besides, nobody knew anything about it in Virville. When they spoke of her, they only said: "Madame Tellier is living at Fécamp," which might mean that she was living on her own private income. It was quite twenty miles from Fécamp to Virville, and for a peasant, twenty miles on land are more than is crossing the ocean to an educated person. The people at Virville had never been farther than Rouen, and nothing attracted the people from Fécamp to a village of five hundred houses, in the middle of a plain, and situated in another department, and, at any rate, nothing was known about her business.

But the Confirmation was coming on, and Madame was in great embarrassment. She had no under mistress, and did not care to leave her house, even for a day, for all the rivalries between the girls upstairs and those downstairs, would infallibly break out; no doubt Frédéric would get drunk, and when he was in that state he would knock anybody down for a mere word. At last, however, she made up her mind to take them

all with her, with the exception of the man, to whom she gave a holiday, until the next day but one.

When she asked her brother, he made no objection, but undertook to put them all up for a night, and so on Saturday morning, the eight o'clock express carried off Madame and her companions in a second-class carriage. As far as Beuzeille, they were alone, and chattered like magpies, but at that station a couple got in. The man, an old peasant, dressed in a blue blouse with a folding collar, wide sleeves, tight at the wrist, and ornamented with white embroidery, wore an old high hat whose long rusty nap seemed to stand on end, held an enormous green umbrella in one hand, and a large basket in the other, from which the heads of three frightened ducks protruded. The woman, who sat stiffly in her rustic finery, had a face like a fowl, and with a nose that was as pointed as a bill. She sat down opposite her husband and did not stir, as she was startled at finding herself in such smart company.

There was certainly an array of striking colours in the carriage. Madame was dressed in blue silk from head to foot, and had on over her dress a dazzling red shawl of imitation French cashmere. Fernande was panting in a Scottish plaid dress, whose bodice, which her companions had laced as tight as they could, had forced up her falling bosom into a double dome, that was continually heaving up and down, and which seemed liquid beneath the material. Raphaële, with a bonnet covered with feathers, so that it looked like a

nest full of birds, had on a lilac dress with gold spots on it, and there was something Oriental about it that suited her Jewish face. Rosa la Rosse had on a pink petticoat with large flounces, and looked like a very fat child, an obese dwarf; while the two Pumps looked as if they had cut their dresses out of old, flowered curtains, dating from the Restoration.

As soon as they were no longer alone in the compartment, the ladies put on staid looks, and began to talk of subjects which might give the others a high opinion of them. But at Bolbec a gentleman with light whiskers, wearing a gold chain, and two or three rings, got in, and put several parcels wrapped in oil-cloth into the net over his head. He looked inclined for a joke, and a good-natured fellow. He saluted, smiled, and said affably:

"Are you ladies changing to another garrison?"

This question embarrassed them all considerably. Madame, however, quickly recovered her composure, and said sharply, to avenge the honour of her corps:

"I think you might try and be polite!"

He excused himself, and said: "I beg your pardon, I ought to have said nunnery."

As Madame could not think of a retort, or perhaps as she thought herself justified sufficiently, she gave him a dignified bow, and pinched in her lips.

Then the gentleman, who was sitting between Rosa la Rosse and the old peasant, began to wink knowingly at the ducks, whose heads were sticking out of the

basket, and when he felt that he had fixed the attention of his public, he began to tickle them under their bills, and spoke funnily to them, to make the company smile.

"We have left our little pond, quack! quack! to make the acquaintance of the little spit, qu-ack! qu-ack!"

The unfortunate creatures turned their necks away, to avoid his caresses, and made desperate efforts to get out of their wicker prison, and then, suddenly, all at once, uttered the most lamentable quacks of distress. The women exploded with laughter. They leaned forward and pushed each other, so as to see better; they were very much interested in the ducks, and the gentleman redoubled his airs, his wit, and his teasing.

Rosa joined in, and leaning over her neighbour's legs, she kissed the three animals on the head, and immediately all the girls wanted to kiss them in turn, and the gentleman took them on to his knees, made them jump up and down and pinched them. The two peasants, who were even in greater consternation than their poultry, rolled their eyes as if they were possessed, without venturing to move, and their old wrinkled faces had not a smile nor a movement.

Then the gentleman, who was a commercial traveller, offered the ladies braces by way of a joke, and taking up one of his packages, he opened it. It was a trick, for the parcel contained garters. There were

blue silk, pink silk, red silk, violet silk, mauve silk garters, and the buckles were made of two gilt metal Cupids, embracing each other. The girls uttered exclamations of delight and looked at them with that gravity which is natural to a woman when she is hankering after a bargain. They consulted one another by their looks or in a whisper, and replied in the same manner, and Madame was longingly handling a pair of orange garters that were broader and more imposing looking than the rest; really fit for the mistress of such an establishment.

The gentleman waited, for a bright idea had struck him.

"Come, my dears," he said, "you must try them on."

There was a storm of exclamations, and they squeezed their petticoats between their legs, as if they thought he was going to ravish them, but he quietly waited his time, and said: "Well, if you will not, I shall pack them up again."

And he added cunningly: "I offer any pair they like, to those who will try them on."

But they would not, and sat up very straight, and looked dignified.

But the two Pumps looked so distressed that he renewed the offer to them, and Flora Balançoire especially visibly hesitated. He pressed her: "Come, my dear, a little courage! Just look at that lilac pair; it will suit your dress admirably . . ."

That decided her, and pulling up her dress she showed a thick leg fit for a milkmaid, in a badly-fitting, coarse stocking. The commercial traveller stooped down and fastened the garter below the knee first of all and then above it; and he tickled the girl gently, which made her scream and jump. When he had done, he gave her the lilac pair, and asked: "Who next?"

"I! I!" they all shouted at once, and he began on Rosa la Rosse, who uncovered a shapeless, round thing without any ankle, a regular "sausage of a leg," as Raphaële used to say.

The commercial traveller complimented Fernande, and grew quite enthusiastic over her powerful columns.

The thin tibias of the handsome Jewess met with less success, and Louise Cocote, by way of a joke, put her petticoats over his head, so that Madame was obliged to interfere to check such unseemly behaviour.

Lastly, Madame herself put out her leg, a handsome, Norman leg, muscular and plump, and in his surprise and pleasure, the commercial traveller gallantly took off his hat to salute that master calf, like a true French cavalier.

The two peasants, who were speechless from surprise, looked aside, out of the corners of their eyes, and they looked so exactly like fowls that the man with the light whiskers, when he sat up, said "cock-

a-doodle-do!" under their very noses, and that gave rise to another storm of amusement.

The old people got out at Motteville, with their basket, their ducks, and their umbrella, and they heard the woman say to her husband, as they went away:

"They are bad women, who are off to that cursed place Paris."

The funny commercial traveller himself got out at Rouen, after behaving so coarsely, that Madame was obliged sharply to put him into his right place, and she added, as a moral: "This will teach us not to talk to the first-comer."

At Oissel they changed trains, and at a little station farther on, Monsieur Joseph Rivet was waiting for them with a large cart and a number of chairs in it, which was drawn by a white horse.

The carpenter politely kissed all the ladies, and then helped them into his conveyance.

Three of them sat on three chairs at the back, Raphaële, Madame and her brother on the three chairs in front, and Rosa, who had no seat, settled herself as comfortably as she could on tall Fernande's knees, and then they set off.

But the horse's jerky trot shook the cart so terribly that the chairs began to dance, throwing the travellers into the air, to the right and to the left, as if they had been dancing puppets, which made them make frightened grimaces, and scream with fear. But this was suddenly cut short by another jolt of the cart.

They clung on to the sides of the vehicle, their bonnets fell on to their backs, their noses on their shoulders, and the white horse went on stretching out his head, and holding out his tail quite straight, a little, hairless rat's tail, with which he whisked his buttocks from time to time.

Joseph Rivet, with one leg on the shafts and the other bent under him, held out the reins with his elbows very high, and he kept uttering a kind of chuckling sound, which made the horse prick up its ears and go faster.

The green country extended on either side of the road, and here and there the colza in flower presented a waving expanse of yellow, from which there arose a strong, wholesome, sweet and penetrating smell, which the wind carried to some distance. Cornflowers showed their little blue heads among the tall rye, and the women wanted to pick them, but Monsieur Rivet refused to stop. Then sometimes a whole field appeared to be covered with blood, so thickly were the poppies growing, and the cart, which looked as if it were filled with flowers of more brilliant hue, drove on through the fields coloured with wild flowers, and disappeared behind the trees of a farm, only to reappear and to go on again through the yellow or green standing crops, studded with red or blue, a dazzling carload of women, fleeing beneath the sun.

One o'clock struck as they drove up to the carpenter's door. They were tired out, and pale with

hunger, as they had eaten nothing since they left home, and Madame Rivet ran out, and made them alight, one after another, and kissed them as soon as they were on the ground, and she seemed as if she would never tire of kissing her sister-in-law, whom she apparently wanted to monopolize. They had lunch in the workshop, which had been cleared out for the next day's dinner.

A capital omelette, followed by fried eel, and washed down by good, sharp cider, made them all feel comfortable.

Rivet had taken a glass so that he might drink their health, and his wife cooked, waited on them, brought in the dishes, took them out, and asked all of them in a whisper whether they had everything they wanted. A number of boards standing against the walls, and heaps of shavings that had been swept into the corners, gave out a smell of planed wood, or carpentering, that resinous odour which penetrates the lungs.

They wanted to see the little girl, but she had gone to church, and would not be back until evening, so they all went out for a stroll in the country.

It was a small village, through which the high road passed. Ten or a dozen houses on either side of the single street, were inhabited by the butcher, the grocer, the carpenter, the innkeeper, the shoemaker, and the baker.

The church was at the end of the street, and was surrounded by a small churchyard; and four enormous lime-trees, which stood just outside the porch, shaded it completely. It was built of flint, in no particular style, and had a slated steeple. Beyond it, the open country began again, broken here and there by clumps of trees which hid the homestead. Although he was in his working clothes, Rivet had given his arm to his sister, out of politeness, and was walking with her majestically. His wife, who was overwhelmed by Raphaële's gold-spangled dress, was walking between her and Fernande, and fat Rosa was trotting behind with Louise Cocote and Flora Balançoire, who was limping along, quite tired out.

The inhabitants came to their doors, the children left off playing, and a window curtain would be raised, revealing a muslin cap, while an old woman with a crutch, and who was almost blind, crossed herself as if it were a religious procession, and they all looked for a long time after those handsome ladies from the town, who had come so far to be present at the confirmation of Joseph Rivet's little girl, and the carpenter rose very much in the public estimation.

As they passed the church, they heard some children singing; little shrill voices were singing a hymn, but Madame would not let them go in, for fear of disturbing the little cherubs.

After a walk, during which Joseph Rivet enumerated the principal landed proprietors, spoke about the

yield of the land, and productiveness of the cows and sheep, he took his herd of women home and installed them in his house, and as it was very small, they had put them into the rooms, two by two.

Just for once, Rivet would sleep in the workshop on the shavings; his wife was going to share her bed with her sister-in-law, and Fernande and Raphaële were to sleep together in the next room. Louise and Flora were put into the kitchen, where they had a mattress on the floor, and Rosa had a little dark cupboard at the top of the stairs to herself, close to the loft, where the candidate for confirmation was to sleep.

When the girl came in, she was overwhelmed with kisses; all the women wished to caress her, with that need of tender expansion, that professional habit of wheedling, which had made them kiss the ducks in the railway carriage.

They all took her on to their laps, stroked her soft, light hair, and pressed her in their arms with vehement and spontaneous outbursts of affection, and the child, who was very good and religious, bore it all patiently.

As the day had been a fatiguing one for everybody, they all went to bed soon after dinner. The whole village was wrapped in that perfect stillness of the country, which is almost like a religious silence, and the girls, who were accustomed to the noisy evenings of their establishment, felt rather impressed by the perfect repose of the sleeping village, and they shivered, not with cold, but with those little shivers of

solitude which come over uneasy and troubled hearts.

As soon as they were in bed, two and two together, they clasped each other in their arms, as if to protect themselves against this feeling of the calm and profound slumber of the earth. But Rosa la Rosse, who was alone in her little dark cupboard, and was not accustomed to sleep alone, felt a vague and painful emotion come over her.

She was tossing about in bed, unable to get to sleep, when she heard the faint sobs of a crying child close to her head through the partition. She was frightened, and called out, and was answered by a weak voice, broken by sobs. It was the little girl, who was always used to sleeping in her mother's room, and who was frightened in her small attic.

Rosa was delighted, and got up softly so as not to awaken anyone, and went and fetched the child. She took her into her warm bed, kissed her and pressed her to her bosom, cossetted her, lavished exaggerated manifestations of tenderness on her, and at last grew calmer herself and went to sleep. And till morning, the candidate for confirmation slept with her head on the prostitute's naked bosom.

At five o'clock, the little church bell ringing the *Angelus,* woke the women up, who usually slept the whole morning long, their only rest after the fatigues of the night. The peasants were up already, and the women went busily from house to house, talking animatedly, carefully bringing short, starched, muslin

dresses in bandboxes, or very long wax tapers, with a bow of silk fringed with gold in the middle, and with dents in the wax for the fingers.

The sun was already high in the blue sky, which still had a rosy tint towards the horizon, like a faint trace of dawn remaining. Families of fowls were walking about outside the houses, and here and there a black cock, with a glistening breast, raised his head, which was crowned by his red comb, flapped his wings, and uttered his shrill crow, which the other cocks repeated.

Vehicles of all sorts came from neighbouring parishes, and discharged tall, Norman women, in dark dresses, with neckerchiefs crossed over the bosom, which were fastened with silver brooches, a hundred years old. The men had put on their blouses over their new frock-coats, or over their old dress-coats of green cloth, the two tails of which hung down below their blouses. When the horses were in the stable, there was a double line of rustic conveyances along the road; carts, cabriolets, tilburies, char-à-bancs, traps of every shape and age, resting on their shafts, or else with them in the air.

The carpenter's house was as busy as a beehive. The ladies, in dressing-jackets and petticoats, with their hanging down, thin, short hair, which looked as if it were faded and worn by use, were busy dressing the child, who was standing motionless on a table, while Madame Tellier was directing the movements of

her flying column. They washed her, did her hair, dressed her, and with the help of a number of pins, they arranged the folds of her dress, and took in the waist, which was too large, and made her look as elegant as possible. Then, when she was ready, she was told to sit down and not to move, and the crowd of excited women hurried off to get ready themselves.

The bell of the little church began to ring again, and its poor tinkle was lost in the air, like a feeble voice which is soon drowned in space. The candidates came out of the houses, and went towards the parochial building which contained the two schools and the town hall and stood quiet at one end of the village, while the "House of God" was situated at the other.

The parents, in their very best clothes, followed their children, with awkward looks, and those clumsy movements of bodies always bent at work. The little girls disappeared in a cloud of muslin, which looked like whipped cream, while the lads, who looked like embryo waiters, and whose heads shone with pomade walked with their legs aparts, so as not to get any dust or dirt on their black trousers.

It was something for the family to be proud of, when a large number of relations, who had come from a distance, surrounded the child, and, consequently, the carpenter's triumph was complete. Madame Tellier's regiment, with its mistress at its head, followed Constance; her father gave his arm to his sister, her mother walked by the side of Raphaële, Fernande,

with Rosa and the two Pumps together, and thus they walked majestically through the village, like a general's staff in full uniform, while the effect on the village was startling.

At the school, the girls arranged themselves under the Sister of Mercy, and the boys under the schoolmaster, a handsome man, who looked well, and they started off, singing a hymn as they went. The boys led the way, in two files, between the two rows of unyoked vehicles, and the girls followed in the same order; and as all the people in the village had given the town ladies the precedence out of politeness, they came immediately behind the girls, and lengthened the double line of the procession still more, three on the right and three on the left, while their dresses were as striking as the set piece in a firework display.

When they went into the church, the congregation grew quite excited. They pressed against each other, they turned round, they jostled one another in order to see, and some of the devout ones spoke almost aloud, as they were so astonished at the sight of those ladies whose dresses were more trimmed than the chasubles of the choir-boys.

The Mayor offered them his pew, the first one on the right, close to the choir, and Madame Tellier sat there with her sister-in-law, Fernande and Raphaële, Rosa la Rosse, and the two Pumps occupied the second seat, in company with the carpenter.

The choir was full of kneeling children, the girls on one side, and the boys on the other, and the long wax tapes which they held looked like lances, pointing in all directions, and three men were standing in front of the lectern, singing as loud as they could. They prolonged the syllables of the sonorous Latin indefinitely, holding on to *Amens* with interminable *a—a's,* while the serpent kept up the monotonous, long drawn out notes, which that long-throated, copper instrument uttered. A child's shrill voice took up the reply, and from time to time a priest sitting in a stall and wearing a square biretta, got up, muttered something, and sat down again, while the three singers continued, with their eyes fixed on the big book of plain-song lying open before them on the outstretched wings of an eagle, mounted on a pivot.

Then silence ensued. The whole congregation knelt with one movement, and the celebrant appeared, old and venerable, with white hair, bent over the chalice which he carried in his left hand. Two assistants in red robes walked in front of him, and behind appeared a crowd of choristers in heavy clogs, who lined up on both sides of the choir.

A small bell chimed amidst dead silence. The service began. The priest moved slowly back and forth in front of the tabernacle of gold, genuflecting, intoning in a cracked voice, lisping with age, the preliminary prayers. As soon as he stopped all the choristers and the organ burst forth simultaneously, and in

the congregation men also sang, not so loudly, more humbly, as befits mere spectators. Suddenly the *Kyrie eleison* rose to the heavens from every heart and throat. Grains of dust and fragments of mouldering wood actually fell from the ancient arch which was shaken by this explosion of sound. The sun beating on the slates of the roof turned the little church into a furnace. A great emotion, an anxious wait, the imminence of the ineffable mystery, filled the hearts of the children with awe, and touched the breasts of their mothers.

The priest, who had remained seated for some time, walked up again towards the altar and, bareheaded, with his silvery hair, he approached the supernatural act with trembling gestures. He turned towards the faithful and, spreading out his hands, pronounced the words: *"Orate, fratres,"* "pray, brethren." They all prayed. The old priest was now uttering in a stammering whisper the mysterious and supreme words; the bell chimed several times in succession; the prostrate crowd called upon God; the children were fainting from boundless anxiety.

It was then that Rosa, with her head in both her hands, suddenly thought of her mother and her village church on her first communion. She almost fancied that that day had returned, when she was so small, and almost hidden in her white dress, and she began to cry.

First of all, she wept silently, and the tears dropped slowly from her eyes, but her emotion increased with

her recollections, and she began to sob. She took out her pocket-handkerchief, wiped her eyes, and held it to her mouth, so as not to scream, but it was useless. A sort of rattle escaped her throat, and she was answered by two other profound, heart-breaking sobs; for her two neighbours, Louise and Flora, who were kneeling near her, overcome by similar recollections, were sobbing by her side, amidst a flood of tears, and as tears are contagious, Madame soon in turn found that her eyes were wet, and on turning to her sister-in-law, she saw that all the occupants of her seat were also crying.

The priest was creating the body of Christ. The children were unconscious of everything, prostrated on the tiled floor by burning devotion, and throughout the church, here and there, a wife, a mother, a sister, seized by the strange sympathy of poignant emotion, and agitated by those handsome ladies on their knees, who were shaken by their sobs, was moistening her checked cotton handkerchief, and pressing her beating heart with her left hand.

Just as the sparks from an engine will set fire to dry grass, so the tears of Rosa and of her companions infected the whole congregation in a moment. Men, women, old men, and lads in new blouses were soon all sobbing, and something superhuman seemed to be hovering over their heads; a spirit, the powerful breath of an invisible and all-powerful being.

Then, in the choir a sharp short noise resounded. The Sister of Mercy had given the signal for communion by striking on her prayer-book, and the children, shivering with a divine fever, approached the holy table. A whole row knelt down. The old priest, holding in his hand the pyx of gilt silver, walked in front of them, administering the sacred host, the body of Christ, the salvation of the world. They opened their mouths convulsively, with nervous grimaces, their eyes shut and their faces deathly pale. And the long communion altar cloth, spread out beneath their chins, quivered like running water.

Suddenly a species of madness seemed to pervade the church, the noise of a crowd in a state of frenzy, a tempest of sobs and stifled cries. It passed through them like gusts of wind which bow the trees in a forest, and the priest remained standing, motionless, the host in his hand, paralysed by emotion, saying: "It is God, it is God who is amongst us, manifesting his presence. He is descending upon his kneeling people in reply to my prayers." He stammered out incoherent prayers, without finding words, prayers of the soul, when it soars towards heaven.

He finished giving communion in such a state of religious exaltation that his legs shook under him, and when he himself had partaken of the blood of the Lord, he plunged into a prayer of ecstatic thanks.

The people behind him gradually grew calmer. The choristers, in all the dignity of their white surplices,

went on in somewhat uncertain voices, and the serpent itself seemed hoarse, as if the instrument had been weeping.

Raising his hands the priest then made a sign to them to be silent, and passing between the two lines of communicants plunged in an ecstasy of happiness, he went up to the chancel steps. The congregation sat down amidst the noise of chairs, and they all blew their noses violently. As soon as they saw the priest, their was silence, and he began to speak in low, muffled, hesitating tones: "My dear brethren and sisters, and children, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. You have just given me the greatest joy of my life. I felt that God was coming down amongst us in response to my call. He came, he was there present, filling your souls, causing your tears to overflow. I am the oldest priest in the diocese, and to-day I am the happiest. A miracle has taken place among us, a true, a great, a sublime miracle. While Jesus Christ was entering the bodies of these little children for the first time, the Holy Spirit, the celestial bird, the breath of God descended upon you, possessed you, seized you, and bent you like reeds in the wind."

Then, in firmer tones, turning towards the two pews where the carpenter's guests were seated:

"I especially thank you, my dear sisters, who have come from such a distance, and whose presence among us, whose evident faith and ardent piety have set such a salutary example to all. You have edified my parish;

your emotion has warmed all hearts; without you, this great day would not, perhaps, have had this really divine character. It is sufficient, at times, that there should be one chosen to keep in the flock, to make the whole flock blessed."

His voice failed him from emotion. He added: "I pray for grace for you. Amen." And he returned to the altar to conclude the service.

Then they all left the church as quickly as possible, and the children themselves were restless, as they were tired with such a prolonged tension of the mind. Besides that, they were hungry, and by degrees the parents left without waiting for the last gospel, to see about dinner.

There was a crowd outside, a noisy crowd, a babel of loud voices, where the shrill Norman accent was discernible. The villagers formed two ranks, and when the children appeared, each family seized its own.

The whole houseful of women caught hold of Constance, surrounded her and kissed her, and Rosa was especially demonstrative. At last she took hold of one hand, while Madame Tellier held the other, and Raphaële and Fernande held up her long muslin petticoat, so that it might not drag in the dust; Louise and Flora brought up the rear with Madame Rivet, and the child, who was very silent and thoughtful, filled with the sense of God whom she had absorbed, set off home, in the midst of this guard of honour.

The dinner was served in the workshop, on long boards supported by trestles, and through the open door they could see all the enjoyment that was going on. Everywhere they were feasting, and through every window were to be seen tables surrounded by people in their Sunday best, and a cheerful noise was heard in every house, while the men were sitting in their shirt-sleeves, drinking pure cider, glass after glass, and in the middle of each company two children could be seen, here two boys, there two girls, dining one with the family of the other.

In the carpenter's house, their gaiety maintained somewhat of an air of reserve, which was the consequence of the emotion of the girls in the morning, and Rivet was the only one who was in a good form, and he was drinking to excess. Madame Tellier was looking at the clock every moment, for, in order not to lose two days following, they ought to take the 3:55 train, which would bring them to Fécamp towards evening.

The carpenter tried very hard to distract her attention, so as to keep his guests until the next day, but he did not succeed, for she never joked when there was business to be done, and as soon as they had had their coffee, she ordered her girls to make haste and get ready, and then, turning to her brother, she said:

"You must have the horses put in immediately," and she herself went to finish her last preparations.

When she came down again, her sister-in-law was waiting to speak to her about the child, and a long conversation took place, in which, however, nothing was settled. The carpenter's wife finished, and pretended to be very much moved, and Madame Tellier, who was holding the girl on her knees, would not pledge herself to anything definite, but merely gave vague promises . . . she would not forget her, there was plenty of time, and then, they would meet again.

But the conveyance did not come to the door, and the women did not come downstairs. Upstairs, they even heard loud laughter, falls, little screams, and much clapping of hands, and so, while the carpenter's wife went to the stable to see whether the cart was ready, Madame went upstairs.

Rivet, who was very drunk, and half undressed, was vainly trying to violate Rosa, who was dying with laughter. The two Pumps were holding him by the arms and trying to calm him, as they were shocked at such a scene after that morning's ceremony; but Raphaële and Fernande were urging him on, writhing and holding their sides with laughter, and they uttered shrill cries at every useless attempt that the drunken fellow made. The man was furious, his face was red, he was all unbuttoned, and he was trying to shake off the two women who were clinging to him, while he was pulling at Rosa's dress with all his might and muttering: "So you won't, you hussy?"

But Madame, who was very indignant, went up to her brother, seized him by the shouders, and threw him out of the room with such violence that he fell against a wall in the passage, and a minute afterwards they heard him pumping water on to his head in the yard, and when he came back with the cart, he was quite calm.

They returned the same way as they had come the day before, and the little white horse started off, with his quick, dancing trot. Under the hot sun, their fun, which had been checked during dinner, broke out again. The girls were now amused at the jolts which the wagon gave, pushed their neighbour's chairs, and burst out laughing every moment, for they were in the vein for it, after Rivet's vain attempt.

There was a haze over the country, the roads were glaring, and dazzled their eyes, and the wheels raised up two trails of dust, which followed the cart for a long time along the high road, and presently Fernande, who was fond of music, asked Rosa to sing something, and she boldly struck up the *Gros Curé de Meudon,* but Madame made her stop immediately, as she thought it a song which was very unsuitable for such a day, and she added:

"Sing us something of Béranger's." And so, after a moment's hesitation, she began Béranger's song, *The Grandmother,* in her worn-out voice:

Ma grand'mère, un soir à sa fête,
De vin pur ayant bu deux doigts,
Nous disait, en branlant la tête:
Que d'amoureux j'eus autrefois!

Combien je regrette
Mon bras si dodu,
Ma jambe bien faite,
Et le temps perdu!

And the girls in chorus, led by Madame, repeated the refrain:

Combien je regrette
Mon bras si dodu,
Ma jambe bien faite,
Et le temps perdu!

"That's fine!" declared Rivet, carried away by the rhythm, and Rosa went on at once:

Quoi, maman, vous n'étiez pas sage?
—Non, vraiment! et de mes appas,
Seule, à quinze ans, j'appris l'usage,
Car la nuit, je ne dormais pas.

They all shouted the refrain to every verse, while Rivet beat time on the shafts with his foot, and on the horse's back with the reins, who, as if he himself

were carried away by the rhythm, broke into a wild gallop, and threw all the women in a heap, one on the top of the other, on the bottom of the conveyance.

They got up, laughing wildly, and the song went on, shouted at the top of their voices, beneath the burning sky, among the ripening grain, to the rapid gallop of the little horse, who set off every time the refrain was sung, and galloped a hundred yards, to their great delight, while occasionally a stone breaker by the road-side sat up and looked at the wild and shouting female load through his wire spectacles.

When they got out at the station, the carpenter said:

"I am sorry you are going; we might have had some fun together." But Madame replied very sensibly: "Everything has its right time, and we cannot always be enjoying ourselves." And then he had a sudden inspiration:

"Look here, I will come and see you at Fécamp next month." And he gave a knowing look, with a bright and roguish eye.

"Come," Madame said, "you must be sensible; you may come if you like, but you are not to be up to any of your tricks."

He did not reply, and as they heard the whistle of the train, he immediately began to kiss them all. When he came to Rosa's turn, he tried to get to her mouth, which she, however, smiling with her lips closed, turned away from him each time by a rapid

movement of her head to one side. He held her in his arms, but he could not attain his object, as his large whip, which he was holding in his hand and waving behind the girl's back in desperation, interfered with his efforts.

"Passengers for Rouen, take your seats, please!" a guard cried, and they got in. There was a slight whistle, followed by a loud whistle, from the engine, which noisily puffed out its first jet of steam, while the wheels began to turn a little, with a visible effort, and Rivet left the station and went to the gate by the side of the line to get another look at Rosa, and as the carriage full of human merchandise passed him, he began to crack his whip and to jump, while he sang at the top of his voice:

Combien je regrette
Mon bras si dodu,
Ma jambe bien faite,
Et le temps perdu!

And then he watched a white pocket-handkerchief, which somebody was waving, as it disappeared in the distance.

PART III

They slept the peaceful sleep of a quiet conscience, until they got to Rouen, and when they returned to

the house, refreshed and rested, Madame could not help saying:

"It was all very well, but I was already longing to get home."

They hurried over their supper, and then, when they had put on their professional costume, waited for their usual customers, and the little coloured lamp outside the door told the passers-by that the flock had returned to the fold, and in a moment the news spread, nobody knew how or by whom. Monsieur Phillippe, the banker's son, even carried his forgetfulness so far, as to send a special messenger to Monsieur Tournevau, who was confined to the bosom of his family.

The fish-curer used every Sunday to have several cousins to dinner, and they were having coffee, when a man came in with a letter in his hand. Monsieur Tournevau was much excited, he opened the envelope and grew pale; it only contained these words in pencil:

"The cargo of cod has been found; the ship has come into port; good business for you. Come immediately."

He felt in his pockets, gave the messenger twopence, and suddenly blushing to his ears, he said: "I must go out." He handed his wife the laconic and mysterious note, rang the bell, and when the servant came in, he asked her to bring him his hat and overcoat immediately. As soon as he was in the street, he

began to run, and the way seemed to him to be twice as long as usual, his impatience was so great.

Madame Tellier's establishment had put on quite a holiday look. On the ground floor, a number of sailors were making a deafening noise, and Louise and Flora drank with one and the other, so as to merit their name of the two Pumps more than ever. They were being called for everywhere at once; already they were not able to cope with business, and the night bid fair to be a very busy one for them.

The circle in the upstairs room was complete by nine o'clock. Monsieur Vasse, the Judge of the Tribunal of Commerce, Madame's usual, but platonic wooer, was talking to her in a corner, in a low voice, and they were both smiling, as if they were about to come to an understanding. Monsieur Poulin, the ex-mayor, was holding Rosa astride on his knees; and she, with her nose close to his, was running her podgy hands through the old gentleman's white whiskers. A glimpse of her bare thigh was visible beneath her upraised dress of yellow silk, and was thrown into relief by the background of his dark trousers, while her red stockings were held up by blue garters, the commercial traveller's present.

Tall Fernande, who was lying on the sofa, had both her feet on Monsieur Pinipesse, the tax-collector's stomach, and her back on young Monsieur Philippe's waistcoat; her right arm was round his neck, while she held a cigarette in her left.

Raphaële appeared to be discussing matters with Monsieur Dupuis, the insurance agent, and she finished by saying: "Yes, my dear, I will, this evening." Then waltzing across the room,—"Anything you like this evening," she cried.

Just then, the door opened suddenly, and Monsieur Tournevau came in, who was greeted with enthusiastic cries of: "Long live Tournevau!" And Raphaële, who was still twirling round, went and threw herself into his arms. He seized her in a vigorous embrace, and without saying a word, lifting her up as if she had been a feather, he went through the room, opened the door at the other end and disappeared with his living burden in the direction of the stairs, amidst great applause.

Rosa, who was exciting the ex-mayor, kissing him every moment, and pulling both his whiskers at the same time in order to keep his head straight, was inspired by this example. "Come, do what he did," she said. The old boy got up, pulled his waistcoat straight, and followed the girl, fumbling in the pocket where he kept his money.

Fernande and Madame remained with the four men, and Monsieur Philippe exclaimed: "I will pay for some champagne; get three bottles, Madame Tellier." And Fernande gave him a hug, and whispered to him: "Play us a waltz, will you?" So he rose and sat down at the old piano in the corner, and managed to get a hoarse waltz out of the entrails of the instrument.

The tall girl put her arms round the Tax-Collector, Madame fell into the arms of Monsieur Vasse, and the two couples turned round, kissing as they danced. Monsieur Vasse, who had formerly danced in good society, waltzed with such elegance that Madame was quite captivated. She looked at him with a glance which said "Yes," a more discreet and delicious "Yes" than the spoken word.

Frédéric brought the champagne; the first cork popped, and Monsieur Philippe played the introduction to a quadrille, through which the four dancers walked in society fashion, decorously, with propriety, deportment, bows and curtsies, and then they began to drink. Monsieur Tournevau returned, relieved, contented, radiant. "I do not know," he said, "what has happened to Raphaële; she is perfect this evening." A glass was handed to him and he drank it off at a gulp, as he murmured, "By heavens, everything is being done on a luxurious scale!"

Monsieur Philippe at once struck up a lively polka, and Monsieur Tournevau started off with the handsome Jewess, whom he held up in the air, without letting her feet touch the ground. Monsieur Pinipesse and Monsieur Vasse had started off with renewed vigour, and from time to time one or other couple would stop to toss off a long glass of sparkling wine, and the dance was threatening to become never-ending, when Rosa opened the door.

She had a candlestick in her hand, her hair was down, and she was in bedroom slippers and chemise. Her face was flushed and very animated: "I want to dance," she shouted. "And what about the old gentleman?" Raphaële asked. Rosa burst out laughing: "Him? he's asleep already. He falls asleep at once." She caught hold of Monsieur Dupuis, who was sitting on the sofa doing nothing, and the polka was resumed.

But the bottles were empty. "I will pay for one," Monsieur Tournevau said. "So will I," Monsieur Vasse declared. "And I will do the same," Monsieur Dupuis remarked.

They all began to clap their hands, and it soon became a regular ball, and from time to time, Louise and Flora ran upstairs quickly, had a few turns, while their customers downstairs grew impatient, and then they returned regretfully to the café. At midnight they were still dancing. From time to time one of the girls would disappear, and when she was wanted for the dance, it would suddenly be discovered that one of the men was also missing.

"Where have you been?" asked Monsieur Philippe, jocularly, when Monsieur Pinipesse returned with Fernande. "Watching Monsieur Poulin sleep,'" replied the Tax-Collector. The joke was a great success, and all the men in turn went upstairs to see Monsieur Poulin sleeping, with one or other of the girls, who on this occasion displayed an unusual amiability.

Madame shut her eyes to what was going on and she had long private talks in corners with Monsieur Vasse, as if to settle the last details of something that had already been settled.

At last, at one o'clock, the two married men, Monsieur Tournevau and Monsieur Pinipesse, declared that they were going home, and wanted to pay. Nothing was charged for except the champagne, and that only cost six francs a bottle, instead of ten, which was the usual price, and when they expressed their surprise at such generosity, Madame, who was beaming, said to them:

"We don't have a holiday every day."

Lazarus

By Leonid Andreyev

Translated by A. Yarmolinsky

I

WHEN Lazarus left the grave, where, for three days and three nights he had been under the enigmatical sway of death, and returned alive to his dwelling, for a long time no one noticed in him those sinister oddities, which, as time when on, made his very name a terror. Gladdened unspeakably by the sight of him who had been returned to life, those near to him caressed him unceasingly, and satiated their burning desire to serve him, in solicitude for his food and drink and garments. And they dressed him gorgeously, in bright colors of hope and laughter, and when, like to a bridegroom in his bridal vestures, he sat again among them at the table, and again ate and drank, they wept, overwhelmed with tenderness. And they summoned the neighbors to look at him who had risen miraculously from the dead. These came and shared the serene joy of the hosts. Strangers from far-off towns and hamlets came and adored the miracle in tempestuous words. Like to a beehive was the house of Mary and Martha.

Whatever was found new in Lazarus' face and gestures was thought to be some trace of a grave illness and of the shocks recently experienced. Evidently, the destruction

wrought by death on the corpse was only arrested by the miraculous power, but its effects were still apparent; and what death had succeeded in doing with Lazarus' face and body, was like an artist's unfinished sketch seen under thin glass. On Lazarus' temples, under his eyes, and in the hollows of his cheeks, lay a deep and cadaverous blueness; cadaverously blue also were his long fingers, and around his fingernails, grown long in the grave, the blue had become purple and dark. On his lips the skin, swollen in the grave, had burst in places, and thin, reddish cracks were formed, shining as though covered with transparent mica. And he had grown stout. His body, puffed up in the grave, retained its monstrous size and showed those frightful swellings, in which one sensed the presence of the rank liquid of decomposition. But the heavy corpse-like odor which penetrated Lazarus' graveclothes and, it seemed, his very body, soon entirely disappeared, the blue spots on his face and hands grew paler, and the reddish cracks closed up, although they never disappeared altogether. That is how Lazarus looked when he appeared before people, in his second life, but his face looked natural to those who had seen him in the coffin.

In addition to the changes in his appearance, Lazarus' temper seemed to have undergone a transformation, but this circumstance startled no one and attracted no attention. Before his death Lazarus had always been cheerful and carefree, fond of laughter and a merry joke. It was because of this brightness and cheerfulness, with not a touch of malice and darkness, that the Master had grown

so fond of him. But now Lazarus had grown grave and taciturn, he never jested, himself, nor responded with laughter to other people's jokes; and the words which he uttered, very infrequently, were the plainest, most ordinary and necessary words, as deprived of depth and significance, as those sounds with which animals express pain and pleasure, thirst and hunger. They were the words that one can say all one's life, and yet they give no indication of what pains and gladdens the depths of the soul.

Thus, with the face of a corpse which for three days had been under the heavy sway of death, dark and taciturn, already appallingly transformed, but still unrecognized by any one in his new self, he was sitting at the feasting table, among friends and relatives, and his gorgeous nuptial garments glittered with yellow gold and bloody scarlet. Broad waves of jubilation, now soft, now tempestuously-sonorous surged around him; warm glances of love were reaching out for his face, still cold with the coldness of the grave; and a friend's warm palm caressed his blue, heavy hand. And music played: the tympanum and the pipe, the cithara and the harp. It was as though bees hummed, grasshoppers chirped and birds warbled over the happy house of Mary and Martha.

II

One of the guests uncautiously lifted the veil. By a thoughtless word he broke the serene charm and uncovered the truth in all its naked ugliness. Ere the thought formed itself in his mind, his lips uttered with a smile:

"Why dost thou not tell us what happened yonder?"

And all grew silent, startled by the question. It was as if it occurred to them only now that for three days Lazarus had been dead, and they looked at him, anxiously awaiting his answer. But Lazarus kept silence.

"Thou dost not wish to tell us,"—wondered the man, "is it so terrible yonder?"

And again his thought came after his words. Had it been otherwise, he would not have asked this question, which at that very moment oppressed his heart with its insufferable horror. Uneasiness seized all present, and with a feeling of heavy weariness they awaited Lazarus' words, but he was silent, sternly and coldly, and his eyes were lowered. And as if for the first time, they noticed the frightful blueness of his face and his repulsive obesity. On the table, as though forgotten by Lazarus, rested his bluish-purple wrist, and to this all eyes turned, as if it were from it that the awaited answer was to come. The musicians were still playing, but now the silence reached them too, and even as water extinguishes scattered embers, so were their merry tunes extinguished in the silence. The pipe grew silent; the voices of the sonorous tympanum and the murmuring harp died away; and as if the strings had burst, the cithara answered with a tremulous, broken note. Silence.

"Thou dost not wish to say?" repeated the guest, unable to check his chattering tongue. But the stillness remained unbroken, and the bluish-purple hand rested motionless. And then he stirred slightly and everyone felt

relieved. He lifted up his eyes, and, lo! straightway embracing everything in one heavy glance, fraught with weariness and horror, he looked at them,—Lazarus who had arisen from the dead.

It was the third day since Lazarus had left the grave. Ever since then many had experienced the pernicious power of his eye, but neither those who were crushed by it forever, nor those who found the strength to resist in it the primordial sources of life,— which is as mysterious as death,—never could they explain the horror which lay motionless in the depth of his black pupils. Lazarus looked calmly and simply with no desire to conceal anything, but also with no intention to say anything; he looked coldly, as he who is infinitely indifferent to those alive. Many carefree people came close to him without noticing him, and only later did they learn with astonishment and fear who that calm stout man was, that walked slowly by, almost touching them with his gorgeous and dazzling garments. The sun did not cease shining, when he was looking, nor did the fountain hush its murmur, and the sky overhead remained cloudless and blue. But the man under the spell of his enigmatical look heard no more the fountain and saw not the sky overhead. Sometimes, he wept bitterly, sometimes he tore his hair and in frenzy called for help; but more often it came to pass that apathetically and quietly he began to die, and so he languished many years, before everybody's very eyes, wasted away, colorless, flabby, dull, like a tree, silently drying up in a stony soil. And of those who gazed at him, the

ones who wept madly, sometimes felt again the stir of life; the others never.

"So thou dost not wish to tell us what thou hast seen yonder?" repeated the man. But now his voice was impassive and dull, and deadly gray weariness showed in Lazarus' eyes. And deadly, gray weariness covered like dust all the faces, and with dull amazement the guests stared at each other and did not understand wherefore they had gathered here and sat at the rich table. The talk ceased. They thought it was time to go home, but could not overcome the flaccid lazy weariness, which glued their muscles, and they kept on sitting there, yet apart and torn away from each other, like pale fires scattered over a dark field.

But the musicians were paid to play and again they took to their instruments, and again tunes full of studied mirth and studied sorrow began to flow and to rise. They unfolded the customary melody, but the guests hearkened in dull amazement. Already they knew not wherefore is it necessary, and why is it well, that people should pluck strings, inflate their cheeks, blow in thin pipes and produce a bizarre, many-voiced noise.

"What bad music," said someone.

The musicians took offense and left. Following them, the guests left one after another, for night was already come. And when placid darkness encircled them and they began to breathe with more ease, suddenly Lazarus' image loomed up before each one in formidable radiance: the blue face of a corpse, grave-clothes gorgeous and resplen-

dent, a cold look, in the depths of which lay motionless an unknown horror. As though petrified, they were standing far apart, and darkness enveloped them, but in the darkness blazed brighter and brighter the super-natural vision of him who for three days had been under the enigmatical sway of death. For three days had he been dead: thrice had the sun risen and set, but he had been dead; children had played, streams murmured over pebbles, the wayfarer had lifted up hot dust in the highroad,—but he had been dead. And now he is again among them,—touches them,—looks at them,—looks at them! and through the black discs of his pupils, as through darkened glass, stares the unknowable Yonder.

III

No one was taking care of Lazarus, for no friends, no relatives were left to him, and the great desert, which encircled the holy city, came near the very threshold of his dwelling. And the desert entered his house, and stretched on his couch, like a wife, and extinguished the fires. No one was taking care of Lazarus. One after the other, his sisters—Mary and Martha—forsook him. For a long while Martha was loath to abandon him, for she knew not who would feed him and pity him; she wept and prayed. But one night, when the wind was roaming in the desert and with a hissing sound the cypresses were bending over the roof, she dressed noiselessly and secretly left the house. Lazarus probably heard the door slam; it banged against the side-post under the gusts of the desert

wind, but he did not rise to go out and to look at her that was abandoning him. All the night long the cypresses hissed over his head and plaintively thumped the door, letting in the cold, greedy desert.

Like a leper he was shunned by everyone, and it was proposed to tie a bell to his neck, as is done with lepers, to warn people against sudden meetings. But someone remarked, growing frightfully pale, that it would be too horrible if by night the moaning of Lazarus' bell were suddenly heard under the windows,—and so the project was abandoned.

And since he did not take care of himself, he would probably have starved to death, had not the neighbors brought him food in fear of something that they sensed but vaguely. The food was brought to him by children; they were not afraid of Lazarus, nor did they mock him with naïve cruelty, as children are wont to do with the wretched and miserable. They were indifferent to him, and Lazarus answered them with the same coldness: he had no desire to caress the black little curls, and to look into their innocent shining eyes. Given to Time and to the Desert, his house was crumbling down, and long since had his famishing lowing goats wandered away to the neighboring pastures. And his bridal garments became threadbare. Ever since that happy day, when the musicians played, he had worn them unaware of the difference of the new and the worn. The bright colors grew dull and faded; vicious dogs and the sharp thorn of the Desert turned the tender fabric into rags.

By day, when the merciless sun slew all things alive, and even scorpions sought shelter under stones and writhed there in a mad desire to sting, he sat motionless under the sunrays, his blue face and the uncouth, bushy beard lifted up, bathing in the fiery flood.

When people still talked to him, he was once asked:

"Poor Lazarus, does it please thee to sit thus and to stare at the sun?"

And he had answered:

"Yes, it does."

So strong, it seemed, was the cold of his three-days' grave, so deep the darkness, that there was no heat on earth to warm Lazarus, nor a splendor that could brighten the darkness of his eyes. That is what came to the mind of those who spoke to Lazarus, and with a sigh they left him.

And when the scarlet, flattened globe would lower, Lazarus would set out for the desert and walk straight toward the sun, as though striving to reach it. He always walked straight toward the sun and those who tried to follow him and to spy upon what he was doing at night in the desert, retained in their memory the black silhouette of a tall stout man against the red background of an enormous flattened disc. Night pursued them with her horrors, and so they did not learn of Lazarus' doings in the desert, but the vision of the black on red was forever branded on their brain. Just as a beast with a splinter in its eye furiously rubs its muzzle with its paws, so they too

foolishly rubbed their eyes, but what Lazaraus had given was indelible, and Death alone could efface it.

But there were people who lived far away, who never saw Lazarus and knew of him only by report. With daring curiosity, which is stronger than fear and feeds upon it, with hidden mockery, they would come to Lazarus who was sitting in the sun and enter into conversation with him. By this time Lazarus' appearance had changed for the better and was not so terrible. The first minute they snapped their fingers and thought of how stupid the inhabitants of the holy city were; but when the short talk was over and they started homeward, their looks were such that the inhabitants of the holy city recognized them at once and said:

"Look, there is one more fool on whom Lazarus has set his eye,"—and they shook their heads regretfully, and lifted up their arms.

There came brave, intrepid warriors, with tinkling weapons; happy youths came with laughter and song; busy tradesmen, jingling their money, ran in for a moment, and haughty priests leaned their crosiers against Lazarus' door, and they were all strangely changed, as they came back. The same terrible shadow swooped down upon their souls and gave a new appearance to the old familiar world.

Those who still had the desire to speak, expressed their feelings thus:

"All things tangible and visible grew hollow, light and transparent,—similar to lightsome shadows in the darkness of night;

"for, that great darkness, which holds the whole cosmos, was dispersed neither by the sun nor by the moon and the stars, but like an immense black shroud enveloped the earth and, like a mother, embraced it;

"it penetrated all the bodies, iron and stone,—and the particles of the bodies, having lost their ties, grew lonely; and it penetrated into the depth of the particles, and the particles of particles became lonely;

"for that great void, which encircles the cosmos, was not filled by things visible: neither by the sun, nor by the moon and the stars, but reigned unrestrained, penetrating everywhere, severing body from body, particle from particle;

"in the void hollow trees spread hollow roots, threatening a fantastic fall; temples, palaces and horses loomed up, and they were hollow; and in the void men moved about restlessly, but they were light and hollow like shadows;

"for, Time was no more, and the beginning of all things came near their end: the building was still being built, and builders were still hammering away, and its ruins were already seen and the void in its place; the man was still being born, but already funeral candles were burning at his head, and now they were extinguished, and there was the void in place of the man and of the funeral candles.

"And wrapped by void and darkness the man in despair trembled in the face of the Horror of the Infinite."

Thus spake the men who had still a desire to speak. But, surely, much more could have told those who wished not to speak, and died in silence.

IV

At that time there lived in Rome a renowned sculptor. In clay, marble and bronze he wrought bodies of gods and men, and such was their beauty, that people called them immortal. But he himself was discontented and asserted that there was something even more beautiful, that he could not embody either in marble or in bronze. "I have not yet gathered the glimmers of the moon, nor have I my fill of sunshine," he was wont to say, "and there is no soul in my marble, no life in my beautiful bronze." And when on moonlight nights he slowly walked along the road, crossing the black shadows of cypresses, his white tunic glittering in the moonshine, those who met him would laugh in a friendly way and say:

"Art thou going to gather moonshine, Aurelius? Why then didst thou not fetch baskets?"

And he would answer, laughing and pointing to his eyes:

"Here are the baskets wherein I gather the sheen of the moon and the glimmer of the sun."

And so it was: the moon glimmered in his eyes and the sun sparkled therein. But he could not translate them into marble and therein lay the serene tragedy of his life.

He was descended from an ancient patrician race, had a good wife and children, and suffered from no want.

When the obscure rumor about Lazarus reached him, he consulted his wife and friends and undertook the far journey to Judea to see him who had miraculously risen from the dead. He was somewhat weary in those days and he hoped that the road would sharpen his blunted senses. What was said of Lazarus did not frighten him: he had pondered much over Death, did not like it, but he disliked also those who confused it with life.

"In this life,—life and beauty;
beyond,—Death, the enigmatical"—

thought he, and there is no better thing for a man to do than to delight in life and in the beauty of all things living. He had even a vain glorious desire to convince Lazarus of the truth of his own view and restore his soul to life, as his body had been restored. This seemed so much easier because the rumors, shy and strange, did not render the whole truth about Lazarus and but vaguely warned against something frightful.

Lazarus had just risen from the stone in order to follow the sun which was setting in the desert, when a rich Roman attended by an armed slave, approached him and addressed him in a sonorous tone of voice:

"Lazarus!"

And Lazarus beheld a superb face, lit with glory, and arrayed in fine clothes, and precious stones sparkling in the sun. The red light lent to the Roman's face and head

the appearance of gleaming bronze—that also Lazarus noticed. He resumed obediently his place and lowered his weary eyes.

"Yes, thou art ugly, my poor Lazarus."—quietly said the Roman, playing with his golden chain; "thou art even horrible, my poor friend; and Death was not lazy that day when thou didst fall so heedlessly into his hands. But thou art stout, and, as the great Caesar used to say, fat people are not ill-tempered; to tell the truth, I don't understand why men fear thee. Permit me to spend the night in thy house; the hour is late, and I have no shelter."

Never had anyone asked Lazarus' hospitality.

"I have no bed," said he.

"I am somewhat of a soldier and I can sleep sitting," the Roman answered. "We shall build a fire."

"I have no fire."

"Then we shall have our talk in the darkness, like two friends. I think, thou wilt find a bottle of wine."

"I have no wine."

The Roman laughed.

"Now I see why thou art so somber and dislikest thy second life. No wine! Why, then we shall do without it: there are words that make the head go round better than the Falernian."

By a sign he dismissed the slave, and they remained all alone. And again the sculptor started speaking, but it was as if, together with the setting sun, life had left his words; and they grew pale and hollow, as if they staggered on unsteady feet, as if they slipped and fell down, drunk

with the heavy lees of weariness and despair. And black chasms grew up between the words—like far-off hints of the great void and the great darkness.

"Now I am thy guest, and thou wilt not be unkind to me, Lazarus!"—said he. "Hospitality is the duty even of those who for three days were dead. Three days, I was told, thou didst rest in the grave. There it must be cold . . . and that is whence comes thy ill habit of going without fire and wine. As to me, I like fire; it grows dark here so rapidly. . . The lines of thy eyebrows and forehead are quite, quite interesting: they are like ruins of strange palaces, buried in ashes after an earthquake. But why dost thou wear such ugly and queer garments? I have seen bridegrooms in thy country, and they wear such clothes—are they not funny—and terrible. . . But art thou a bridegroom?"

The sun had already disappeared, a monstrous black shadow came running from the east—it was as if gigantic bare feet began rumbling on the sand, and the wind sent a cold wave along the backbone.

"In the darkness thou seemest still larger, Lazarus, as if thou hast grown stouter in these moments. Dost thou feed on darkness, Lazarus? I would fain have a little fire—at least a little fire, a little fire. I feel somewhat chilly, your nights are barbarously cold. . . Were it not so dark, I should say that thou wert looking at me, Lazarus. Yes, it seems to me, thou art looking. . . Why, thou art looking at me, I feel it,—but there thou art smiling."

Night came, and filled the air with heavy blackness.

"How well it will be, when the sun will rise to-morrow anew. . . I am a great sculptor, thou knowest; that is how my friends call me. I create. Yes, that is the word . . . but I need daylight. I give life to the cold marble, I melt sonorous bronze in fire, in bright hot fire. . . Why didst thou touch me with thy hand?"

"Come"—said Lazarus—"thou art my guest."

And they went to the house. And a long night enveloped the earth.

The slave, seeing that his master did not come, went to seek him, when the sun was already high in the sky. And he beheld his master side by side with Lazarus: in profound silence were they sitting right under the dazzling and scorching sunrays and looking upward. The slave began to weep and cried out:

"My master, what has befallen thee, master?"

The very same day the sculptor left for Rome. On the way Aurelius was pensive and taciturn, staring attentively at everything—the men, the ship, the sea, as though trying to retain something. On the high sea a storm burst upon them, and all through it Aurelius stayed on the deck and eagerly scanned the seas looming near and sinking with a thud.

At home his friends were frightened at the change which had taken place in Aurelius, but he calmed them, saying meaningly:

"I have found it."

And without changing the dusty clothes he wore on his journey, he fell to work, and the marble obediently re-

sounded under his sonorous hammer. Long and eagerly worked he, admitting no one, until one morning he announced that the work was ready and ordered his friends to be summoned, severe critics and connoisseurs of art. And to meet them he put on bright and gorgeous garments, that glittered with yellow gold—and—scarlet byssus.

"Here is my work," said he thoughtfully.

His friends glanced and a shadow of profound sorrow covered their faces. It was something monstrous, deprived of all the lines and shapes familiar to the eye, but not without a hint at some new, strange image.

On a thin, crooked twig, or rather on an ugly likeness of a twig rested askew a blind, ugly, shapeless, outspread mass of something utterly and inconceivably distorted, a mad heap of wild and bizarre fragments, all feebly and vainly striving to part from one another. And, as if by chance, beneath one of the wildly-rent salients a butterfly was chiseled with divine skill, all airy loveliness, delicacy and beauty, with transparent wings, which seemed to tremble with an impotent desire to take flight.

"Wherefore this wonderful butterfly, Aurelius?" said somebody falteringly.

"I know not"—was the sculptor's answer.

But it was necessary to tell the truth, and one of his friends who loved him best said firmly:

"This is ugly, my poor friend. It must be destroyed. Give me the hammer."

And with two strokes he broke the monstrous man into pieces, leaving only the infinitely delicate butterfly untouched.

From that time on Aurelius created nothing. With profound indifference he looked at marble and bronze, and on his former divine works, where everlasting beauty rested. With the purpose of arousing his former fervent passion for work and awakening his deadened soul, his friends took him to see other artists' beautiful works,—but he remained indifferent as before, and the smile did not warm up his tightened lips. And only after listening to lengthy talks about beauty, he would retort wearily and indolently:

"But all this is a lie."

And by the day, when the sun was shining, he went into his magnificent, skillfully-built garden and having found a place without shadow, he exposed his bare head to the glare and heat. Red and white butterflies fluttered around; from the crooked lips of a drunken satyr, water streamed down with a splash into a marble cistern, but he sat motionless and silent,—like a pallid reflection of him who, in the far-off distance, at the very gates of the stony desert, sat under the fiery sun.

V

And now it came to pass that the great, deified Augustus himself summoned Lazarus. The imperial messengers dressed him gorgeously, in solemn nuptial clothes, as if Time had legalized them, and was to remain until his very death the bridegroom of an unknown bride. It was as

though an old, rotting coffin had been gilt and furnished with new, gay tassels. And men, all in trim and bright attire, rode after him, as if in bridal procession indeed, and those foremost trumpeted loudly, bidding people to clear the way for the emperor's messengers. But Lazarus' way was deserted: his native land cursed the hateful name of him who had miraculously risen from the dead, and people scattered at the very news of his appalling approach. The solitary voice of the brass trumpets sounded in the motionless air, and the wilderness alone responded with its languid echo.

Then Lazarus went by sea. And his was the most magnificently arrayed and the most mournful ship that ever mirrored itself in the azure waves of the Mediterranean Sea. Many were the travelers aboard, but like a tomb was the ship, all silence and stillness, and the despairing water sobbed at the steep, proudly curved prow. All alone sat Lazarus exposing his head to the blaze of the sun, silently listening to the murmur and splash of the wavelets, and afar seamen and messengers were sitting, a vague group of weary shadows. Had the thunder burst and the wind attacked the red sails, the ships would probably have perished, for none of those aboard had either the will or the strength to struggle for life. With a supreme effort some mariners would reach the board and eagerly scan the blue, transparent deep, hoping to see a naiad's pink shoulder flash in the hollow of an azure wave, or a drunken gay centaur dash along and in frenzy splash the

wave with his hoof. But the sea was like a wilderness, and the deep was dumb and deserted.

With utter indifference did Lazarus set his feet on the street of the eternal city. As though all her wealth, all the magnificence of her palaces built by giants, all the resplendence, beauty and music of her refined life were but the echo of the wind in the wilderness, the reflection of the desert quicksand. Chariots were dashing, and along the streets were moving crowds of strong, fair, proud builders of the eternal city and haughty participants in her life; a song sounded; fountains and women laughed a pearly laughter; drunken philosophers harangued, and the sober listened to them with a smile; hoofs struck the stone pavements. And surrounded by cheerful noise, a stout, heavy man was moving, a cold spot of silence and despair, and on his way he sowed disgust, anger, and vague, gnawing weariness. Who dares to be sad in Rome, wondered indignantly the citizens, and frowned. In two days the entire city already knew all about him who had miraculously risen from the dead, and shunned him shyly.

But some daring people there were, who wanted to test their strength, and Lazarus obeyed their imprudent summons. Kept busy by state affairs, the emperor constantly delayed the reception, and seven days did he who had risen from the dead go about visiting others.

And Lazarus came to a cheerful Epicurean, and the host met him with laughter on his lips:

"Drink, Lazarus, drink!"—shouted he. "Would not Augustus laugh to see thee drunk!"

And half-naked drunken women laughed, and rose petals fell on Lazarus' blue hands. But then the Epicurean looked into Lazarus' eyes, and his gaiety ended forever. Drunkard remained he for the rest of his life; never did he drink, yet forever was he drunk. But instead of the gay revery which wine brings with it, frightful dreams began to haunt him, the sole food of his stricken spirit. Day and night he lived in the poisonous vapors of his nightmares, and death itself was not more frightful than her raving, monstrous forerunners.

And Lazarus came to a youth and his beloved, who loved each other and were most beautiful in their passion. Proudly and strongly embracing his love, the youth said with serene regret:

"Look at us, Lazarus, and share our joy. Is there anything stronger than love?"

And Lazarus looked. And for the rest of their life they kept on loving each other, but their passion grew gloomy and joyless, like those funeral cypresses whose roots feed on the decay of the graves and whose black summits in a still evening hour seek in vain to reach the sky. Thrown by the unknown forces of life into each other's embraces, they mingled tears with kisses, voluptuous pleasures with pain, and they felt themselves doubly slaves, obedient slaves to life, and patient servants of the silent Nothingness. Ever united, ever severed, they blazed

like sparks and like sparks lost themselves in the boundless Dark.

And Lazarus came to a haughty sage, and the sage said to him:

"I know all the horrors thou canst reveal to me. Is there anything thou canst frighten me with?"

But before long the sage felt that the knowledge of horror was far from being the horror itself, and that the vision of Death, was not Death. And he felt that wisdom and folly are equal before the face of Infinity, for Infinity knows them not. And it vanished, the dividing-line between knowledge and ignorance, truth and falsehood, top and bottom, and the shapeless thought hung suspended in the void. Then the sage clutched his gray head and cried out frantically:

"I cannot think! I cannot think!"

Thus under the indifferent glance for him, who miraculously had risen from the dead, perished everything that asserts life, its significance and joys. And it was suggested that it was dangerous to let him see the emperor, that it was better to kill him and, having buried him secretly, to tell the emperor that he had disappeared no one knew whither. Already swords were being whetted and youths devoted to the public welfare prepared for the murder, when Augustus ordered Lazarus to be brought before him next morning, thus destroying the cruel plans.

If there was no way of getting rid of Lazarus, at least it was possible to soften the terrible impression his face produced. With this in view, skillful painters, barbers

and artists were summoned, and all night long they were busy over Lazarus' head. They cropped his beard, curled it and gave it a tidy, agreeable appearance. By means of paints they concealed the corpse-like blueness of his hands and face. Repulsive were the wrinkles of suffering that furrowed his old face, and they were puttied, painted and smoothed; then, over the smooth background, wrinkles of good-tempered laughter and pleasant, carefree mirth were skillfully painted with fine brushes.

Lazarus submitted indifferently to everything that was done to him. Soon he was turned into a becomingly stout, venerable old man, into a quiet and kind grandfather of numerous offspring. It seemed that the smile, with which only a while ago he was spinning funny yarns, was still lingering on his lips, and that in the corner of his eye serene tenderness was hiding, the companion of old age. But people did not dare change his nuptial garments, and they would not change his eyes, two dark and frightful glasses through which looked at men, the unknowable Yonder.

VI

Lazarus was not moved by the magnificence of the imperial palace. It was as though he saw no difference between the crumbling house, closely pressed by the desert, and the stone palace, solid and fair, and indifferently he passed into it. And the hard marble of the floors under his feet grew similar to the quicksand of the desert, and the multitude of richly dressed and haughty men became

like void air under his glance. No one looked into his face, as Lazarus passed by, fearing to fall under the appalling influence of his eyes; but when the sound of his heavy footsteps had sufficiently died down, the courtiers raised their heads and with fearful curiosity examined the figure of a stout, tall, slightly bent old man, who was slowly penetrating into the very heart of the imperial palace. Were Death itself passing, it would be faced with no greater fear: for until then the dead alone knew Death, and those alive knew Life only—and there was no bridge between them. But this extraordinary man, although alive, knew Death, and enigmatical, appalling, was his cursed knowledge. "Woe," people thought, "he will take the life of our great, deified Augustus," and they sent curses after Lazarus, who meanwhile kept on advancing into the interior of the palace.

Already did the emperor know who Lazarus was, and prepared to meet him. But the monarch was a brave man, and felt his own tremendous, unconquerable power, and in his fatal duel with him who had miraculously risen from the dead he wanted not to invoke human help. And so he met Lazarus face to face:

"Lift not thine eyes upon me, Lazarus," he ordered. "I heard thy face is like that of Medusa and turns into stone whomsoever thou lookest at. Now, I wish to see thee and to have a talk with thee, before I turn into stone,"—added he in a tone of kingly jesting, not devoid of fear.

Coming close to him, he carefully examined Lazarus' face and his strange festal garments. And although he had a keen eye, he was deceived by his appearance.

"So. Thou dost not appear terrible, my venerable old man. But the worse for us, if horror assumes such a respectable and pleasant air. Now, let us have a talk."

Augustus sat, and questioning Lazarus with his eye as much as with words, started the conversation:

"Why didst thou not greet me as thou enteredst?"

Lazarus answered indifferent:

"I knew not it was necessary."

"Art thou a Christian?"

"No."

Augustus approvingly shook his head.

"That is good. I do not like Christians. They shake the tree of life before it is covered with fruit, and disperse its odorous bloom to the winds. But who art thou?"

With a visible effort Lazarus answered:

"I was dead."

"I had heard that. But who art thou now?"

Lazarus was silent, but at last repeated in a tone of weary apathy:

"I was dead."

"Listen to me, stranger," said the emperor, distinctly and severely giving utterance to the thought that had come to him at the beginning, "my realm is the realm of Life, my people are of the living, not of the dead. Thou art here one too many. I know not who thou art and what thou sawest there; but, if thou liest, I hate thy lies,

and if thou tellst the truth, I hate thy truth. In my bosom I feel the throb of life; I feel strength in my arm, and my proud thoughts, like eagles, pierce the space. And yonder in the shelter of my rule, under the protection of laws created by me, people live and toil and rejoice. Dost thou hear the battle-cry, the challenge men throw into the face of the future?"

Augustus, as in prayer, stretched forth his arms and exclaimed solemnly:

"Be blessed, O great and divine Life!"

Lazarus was silent, and with growing sternness the emperor went on:

"Thou art not wanted here, miserable remnant, snatched from under Death's teeth, thou inspirest weariness and disgust with life; like a caterpillar in the fields, thou gloatest on the rich ear of joy and belchest out the drivel of despair and sorrow. Thy truth is like a rusty sword in the hands of a nightly murderer,—and as a murderer thou shalt be executed. But before that, let me look into thine eyes. Perchance, only cowards are afraid of them, but in the brave they awake the thirst for strife and victory; then thou shalt be rewarded, not executed. . . . Now, look at me, Lazarus."

At first it appeared to the deified Augustus that a friend was looking at him,—so soft, so tenderly-fascinating was Lazarus' glance. It promised not horror, but sweet rest, and the Infinite seemed to him a tender mistress, a compassionate sister, a mother. But stranger and stronger grew its embraces, and already the mouth, greedy of hiss-

ing kisses, interfered with the monarch's breathing, and already to the surface of the soft tissues of the body came the iron of the bones and tightened its merciless circle,—and unknown fangs, blunt and cold, touched his heart and sank into it with slow indolence.

"It pains," said the deified Augustus, growing pale. "But look at me, Lazarus, look."

It was as though some heavy gates, ever closed, were slowly moving apart, and through the growing interstice the appalling horror of the Infinite poured in slowly and steadily. Like two shadows there entered the shoreless void and the unfathomable darkness; they extinguished the sun, ravished the earth from under the feet, and the roof from over the head. No more did the frozen heart ache.

"Look, look, Lazarus," ordered Augustus tottering.

Time stood still, and the beginning of each thing grew frightfully near to its end. Augustus' throne just erected, crumbled down, and the void was already in the place of the throne and of Augustus. Noiselessly did Rome crumble down, and a new city stood on its site and it too was swallowed by the void. Like fantastic giants, cities, states and countries fell down and vanished in the void darkness—and with uttermost indifference did the insatiable black womb of the Infinite swallow them.

"Halt!"—ordered the emperor.

In his voice sounded already a note of indifference, his hands dropped in languor, and in the vain struggle with

the onrushing darkness his fiery eyes now blazed up, and now went out.

"My life thou hast taken from me, Lazarus,"—said he in a spiritless, feeble voice.

And these words of hopelessness saved him. He remembered his people, whose shield he was destined to be, and keen salutary pain pierced his deadened heart. "They are doomed to death," he thought wearily. "Serene shadows in the darkness of the Infinite," thought he, and horror grew upon him. "Frail vessels with living seething blood, with a heart that knows sorrow and also great joy," said he in his heart, and tenderness pervaded it.

Thus pondering and oscillating between the poles of Life and Death, he slowly came back to life, to find in its suffering and in its joys a shield against the darkness of the void and the horror of the Infinite.

"No, thou hast not murdered me, Lazarus," said he firmly, "but I will take thy life. Be gone."

That evening the deified Augustus partook of his meats and drinks with particular joy. Now and then his lifted hand remained suspended in the air, and a dull glimmer replaced the bright sheen of his fiery eye. It was the cold wave of Horror that surged at his feet. Defeated, but not undone, ever awaiting its hour, that Horror stood at the emperor's bedside, like a black shadow all through his life; it swayed his nights, but yielded the days to the sorrows and joys of life.

The following day, the hangman with a hot iron burnt out Lazarus' eyes. Then he was sent home. The deified Augustus dared not kill him.

* * * * * * * * *

Lazarus returned to the desert, and the wilderness met him with hissing gusts of wind and the heat of the blazing sun. Again he was sitting on a stone, his rough, bushy beard lifted up; and the two black holes in place of his eyes looked at the sky with an expression of dull terror. Afar-off the holy city stirred noisily and restlessly, but around him everything was deserted and dumb. No one approached the place where lived he who had miraculously risen from the dead, and long since his neighbors had forsaken their houses. Driven by the hot iron into the depth of his skull, his cursed knowledge hid there in an ambush. As though leaping out from an ambush it plunged its thousand invisible eyes into the man,—and no one dared look at Lazarus.

And in the evening, when the sun, reddening and growing wider, would come nearer and nearer the western horizon, the blind Lazarus would slowly follow it. He would stumble against stones and fall, stout and weak as he was; would rise heavily to his feet and walk on again; and on the red screen of the sunset his black body and outspread hands would form a monstrous likeness of a cross.

And it came to pass that once he went out and did not come back. Thus seemingly ended the second life of him who for three days had been under the enigmatical sway of death, and rose miraculously from the dead.

The Gentleman from San Francisco

By Ivan Bunin

Translated by A. Yarmolinsky

"Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city!"—
—Revelation of St. John.

THE Gentleman from San Francisco—neither at Naples nor on Capri could any one recall his name—with his wife and daughter, was on his way to Europe, where he intended to stay for two whole years, solely for the pleasure of it.

He was firmly convinced that he had a full right to a rest, enjoyment, a long comfortable trip, and what not. This conviction had a two-fold reason: first he was rich, and second, despite his fifty-eight years, he was just about to enter the stream of life's pleasures. Until now he had not really lived, but simply existed, to be sure—fairly well, yet putting off his fondest hopes for the future. He toiled unweariedly—the Chinese, whom he imported by thousands for his works, knew full well what it meant,—and finally he saw that he had made much, and that he had nearly come up to the level of those whom he had once taken as a model, and he decided to catch his breath. The class of people to which he belonged was in the habit of beginning its enjoyment of life with a trip to Europe,

India, Egypt. He made up his mind to do the same. Of course, it was first of all himself that he desired to reward for the years of toil, but he was also glad for his wife and daughter's sake. His wife was never distinguished by any extraordinary impressionability, but then, all elderly American women are ardent travelers. As for his daughter, a girl of marriageable age, and somewhat sickly,—travel was the very thing she needed. Not to speak of the benefit to her health, do not happy meetings occur during travels? Abroad, one may chance to sit at the same table with a prince, or examine frescoes side by side with a multi-millionaire.

The itinerary the Gentleman from San Francisco planned out was an extensive one. In December and January he expected to relish the sun of southern Italy, monuments of antiquity, the tarantella, serenades of wandering minstrels, and that which at his age is felt most keenly—the love, not entirely disinterested though, of young Neapolitan girls. The Carnival days he planned to spend at Nice and Monte-Carlo, which at that time of the year is the meeting-place of the choicest society, the society upon which depend all the blessings of civilization: the cut of dress suits, the stability of thrones, the declaration of wars, the prosperity of hotels. Some of these people passionately give themselves over to automobile and boat races, others to roulette, others, again, busy themselves with what is called flirtation, and others shoot pigeons, which soar so beautifully from the dove-cote, hover a while over the emerald lawn, on the background of the forget-

me-not colored sea, and then suddenly hit the ground, like little white lumps. Early March he wanted to devote to Florence, and at Easter, to hear the Miserere in Paris. His plans also included Venice, Paris, bull-baiting at Seville, bathing on the British Islands, also Athens, Constantinople, Palestine, Egypt, and even Japan, of course, on the way back. . . . And at first things went very well indeed.

It was the end of November, and all the way to Gibraltar the ship sailed across seas which were either clad by icy darkness or swept by storms carrying wet snow. But there were no accidents, and the vessel did not even roll. The passengers,— all people of consequence—were numerous, and the steamer, the famous "Atlantis," resembled the most expensive European hotel with all improvements: a night refreshment-bar, Oriental baths, even a newspaper of its own. The manner of living was a most aristocratic one; passengers rose early, awakened by the shrill voice of a bugle, filling the corridors at the gloomy hour when the day broke slowly and sulkily over the grayish-green watery desert, which rolled heavily in the fog. After putting on their flannel pajamas, they took coffee, chocolate, cocoa; they seated themselves in marble baths, went through their exercises, whetting their appetites and increasing their sense of well-being, dressed for the day, and had their breakfast. Till eleven o'clock they were supposed to stroll on the deck, breathing in the chill freshness of the ocean, or they played table-tennis, or other games which arouse the appetite. At eleven o'clock a col-

lation was served consisting of sandwiches and bouillon, after which people read their newspapers, quietly waiting for luncheon, which was more nourishing and varied than the breakfast. The next two hours were given to rest; all the decks were crowded then with steamer chairs, on which the passengers, wrapped in plaids, lay stretched, dozing lazily, or watching the cloudy sky and the foamy-fringed water hillocks flashing beyond the sides of the vessel. At five o'clock, refreshed and gay, they drank strong, fragrant tea; at seven the sound of the bugle announced a dinner of nine courses. . . . Then the Gentleman from San Francisco, rubbing his hands in an onrush of vital energy, hastened to his luxurious state-room to dress.

In the evening, all the decks of the "Atlantis" yawned in the darkness, shone with their innumerable fiery eyes, and a multitude of servants worked with increased feverishness in the kitchens, dish-washing compartments, and wine-cellars. The ocean, which heaved about the sides of the ship, was dreadful, but no one thought of it. All had faith in the controlling power of the captain, a red-headed giant, heavy and very sleepy, who, clad in a uniform with broad golden stripes, looked like a huge idol, and but rarely emerged, for the benefit of the public, from his mysterious retreat. On the fore-castle, the siren gloomily roared or screeched in a fit of mad rage, but few of the diners heard the siren: its hellish voice was covered by the sounds of an excellent string orchestra, which played ceaselessly and exquisitely in a vast hall, decorated with marble and spread with velvety carpets. The hall

was flooded with torrents of light, radiated by crystal lustres and gilt chandeliers; it was filled with a throng of bejeweled ladies in low-necked dresses, of men in dinner-coats, graceful waiters, and deferential maîtres-d'hôtel. One of these,—who accepted wine orders exclusively—wore a chain on his neck like some lord-mayor. The evening dress, and the ideal linen made the Gentleman from San Francisco look very young. Dry-skinned, of average height, strongly, though irregularly built, glossy with thorough washing and cleaning, and moderately animated, he sat in the golden splendor of this palace. Near him stood a bottle of amber-colored Johannisberg, and goblets of most delicate glass and of varied sizes, surmounted by a frizzled bunch of fresh hyacinths. There was something Mongolian in his yellowish face with its trimmed silvery moustache; his large teeth glimmered with gold fillings, and his strong, bald head had a dull glow, like old ivory. His wife, a big, broad and placid woman, was dressed richly, but in keeping with her age. Complicated, but light, transparent, and innocently immodest was the dress of his daughter, tall and slender, with magnificent hair gracefully combed; her breath was sweet with violet-scented tablets, and she had a number of tiny and most delicate pink dimples near her lips and between her slightly-powdered shoulder blades. . .

The dinner lasted two whole hours, and was followed by dances in the dancing hall, while the men—the Gentleman from San Francisco among them—made their way to the refreshment bar, where negroes in red jackets and

with eye-balls like shelled hard-boiled eggs, waited on them. There, with their feet on tables, smoking Havana cigars, and drinking themselves purple in the face, they settled the destinies of nations on the basis of the latest political and stock-exchange news. Outside, the ocean tossed up black mountains with a thud; and the snow-storm hissed furiously in the rigging grown heavy with slush; the ship trembled in every limb, struggling with the storm and ploughing with difficulty the shifting and seething mountainous masses that threw far and high their foaming tails; the siren groaned in agony, choked by storm and fog; the watchmen in their towers froze and almost went out of their minds under the superhuman stress of attention. Like the gloomy and sultry mass of the inferno, like its last, ninth circle, was the submersed womb of the steamer, where monstrous furnaces yawned with red-hot open jaws, and emitted deep, hooting sounds, and where the stokers, stripped to the waist, and purple with reflected flames, bathed in their own dirty, acid sweat. And here, in the refreshment-bar, carefree men, with their feet, encased in dancing shoes, on the table, sipped cognac and liqueurs, swam in waves of spiced smoke, and exchanged subtle remarks, while in the dancing-hall everything sparkled and radiated light, warmth and joy. The couples now turned around in a waltz, now swayed in the tango; and the music, sweetly shameless and sad, persisted in its ceaseless entreaties. . . . There were many persons of note in this magnificent crowd: an ambassador, a dry, modest old man; a great millionaire, shaved, tall,

of an indefinite age, who, in his old-fashioned dress-coat, looked like a prelate; also a famous Spanish writer, and an international belle, already slightly faded and of dubious morals. There was also among them a loving pair, exquisite and refined, whom everybody watched with curiosity and who did not conceal their bliss; he danced only with her, sang—with great skill—only to her accompaniment, and they were so charming, so graceful. The captain alone knew that they had been hired by the company at a good salary to play at love, and that they had been sailing now on one, now on another steamer, for quite a long time.

In Gibraltar everybody was gladdened by the sun, and by the weather which was like early Spring. A new passenger appeared aboard the "Atlantis" and aroused everybody's interest. It was the crown-prince of an Asiatic state, who traveled incognito, a small man, very nimble, though looking as if made of wood, broad-faced, narrow-eyed, in gold-rimmed glasses, somewhat disagreeable because of his long black moustache, which was sparse like that of a corpse, but otherwise—charming, plain, modest. In the Mediterranean the breath of winter was again felt. The seas were heavy and motley like a peacock's tail and the waves stirred up by the gay gusts of the tramontane, tossed their white crests under a sparkling and perfectly clear sky. Next morning, the sky grew paler and the skyline misty. Land was near. Then Ischia and Capri came in sight, and one could descry, through an opera-glass, Naples, looking like pieces of sugar strewn at the

foot of an indistinct dove-colored mass, and above them, a snow-covered chain of distant mountains. The decks were crowded, many ladies and gentlemen put on light-fur-coats; Chinese servants, bandy-legged youths—with pitch black braids down to the heels and with girlish, thick eyelashes,—always quiet and speaking in a whisper, were carrying to the foot of the staircases, plaid wraps, canes, and crocodile-leather valises and hand-bags. The daughter of the Gentleman from San Francisco stood near the prince, who, by a happy chance, had been introduced to her the evening before, and feigned to be looking steadily at something far-off, which he was pointing out to her, while he was, at the same time, explaining something, saying something rapidly and quietly. He was so small that he looked like a boy among other men, and he was not handsome at all. And then there was something strange about him; his glasses, derby and coat were most commonplace, but there was something horse-like in the hair of his sparse moustache, and the thin, tanned skin of his flat face looked as though it were somewhat stretched and varnished. But the girl listened to him, and so great was her excitement that she could hardly grasp the meaning of his words, her heart palpitated with incomprehensible rapture and with pride that he was standing and speaking with her and nobody else. Everything about him was different: his dry hands, his clean skin, under which flowed ancient kingly blood, even his light shoes and his European dress, plain, but singularly tidy—everything hid an inexplicable fascination and engendered

thoughts of love. And the Gentleman from San Francisco, himself, in a silk-hat, gray leggings, patent leather shoes, kept eyeing the famous beauty who was standing near him, a tall, stately blonde, with eyes painted according to the latest Parisian fashion, and a tiny, bent peeled-off pet-dog, to whom she addressed herself. And the daughter, in a kind of vague perplexity, tried not to notice him.

Like all wealthy Americans he was very liberal when traveling, and believed in the complete sincerity and goodwill of those who so painstakingly fed him, served him day and night, anticipating his slightest desire, protected him from dirt and disturbance, hauled things for him, hailed carriers, and delivered his luggage to hotels. So it was everywhere, and it had to be so at Naples. Meanwhile, Naples grew and came nearer. The musicians, with their shining brass instruments had already formed a group on the deck, and all of a sudden deafened everybody with the triumphant sounds of a ragtime march. The giant captain, in his full uniform appeared on the bridge and like a gracious Pagan idol, waved his hands to the passengers,— and it seemed to the Gentleman from San Francisco,—as it did to all the rest,—that for him alone thundered the march, so greatly loved by proud America, and that him alone did the captain congratulate on the safe arrival. And when the "Atlantis" had finally entered the port and all its many-decked mass leaned against the quay, and the gang-plank began to rattle heavily,—what a crowd of porters, with their assistants,

in caps with golden galloons, what a crowd of various boys and husky ragamuffins with pads of colored postal cards attacked the Gentleman from San Francisco, offering their services! With kindly contempt he grinned at these beggars, and, walking towards the automobile of the hotel where the prince might stop, muttered between his teeth, now in English, now in Italian—"Go away! Via . . ."

Immediately, life at Naples began to follow a set routine. Early in the morning breakfast was served in the gloomy dining-room, swept by a wet draught from the open windows looking upon a stony garden, while outside the sky was cloudy and cheerless, and a crowd of guides swarmed at the door of the vestibule. Then came the first smiles of the warm roseate sun, and from the high suspended balcony, a broad vista unfolded itself: Vesuvius, wrapped to its base in radiant morning vapors; the pearly ripple, touched to silver, of the bay, the delicate outline of Capri on the skyline; tiny asses dragging two-wheeled buggies along the soft, sticky embankment, and detachments of little soldiers marching somewhere to the tune of cheerful and defiant music.

Next on the day's program was a slow automobile ride along crowded, narrow, and damp corridors of streets, between high, many-windowed buildings. It was followed by visits to museums, lifelessly clean and lighted evenly and pleasantly, but as though with the dull light cast by snow;—then to churches, cold, smelling of wax, always alike: a majestic entrance, closed by a ponderous, leather curtain, and inside—a vast void, silence, quiet flames of

seven-branched candlesticks, sending forth a red glow from where they stood at the farther end, on the bedecked altar,—a lonely, old woman lost among the dark wooden benches, slippery gravestones under the feet, and somebody's "Descent from the Cross," infallibly famous. At one o'clock—luncheon, on the mountain of San-Martius, where at noon the choicest people gathered, and where the daughter of the Gentleman from San Francisco once almost fainted with joy, because it seemed to her that she saw the Prince in the hall, although she had learned from the newspapers that he had temporarily left for Rome. At five o'clock it was customary to take tea at the hotel, in a smart *salon,* where it was far too warm because of the carpets and the blazing fireplaces; and then came dinner-time—and again did the mighty, commanding voice of the gong resound throughout the building, again did silk rustle and the mirrors reflect files of ladies in low-necked dresses ascending the staircases, and again the splendid palatial dining hall opened with broad hospitality, and again the musicians' jackets formed red patches on the estrade, and the black figures of the waiters swarmed around the maître-d'hôtel, who, with extraordinary skill, poured a thick pink soup into plates. . . . As everywhere, the dinner was the crown of the day. People dressed for it as for a wedding, and so abundant was it in food, wines, mineral waters, sweets and fruits, that about eleven o'clock in the evening chamber-maids would carry to all the rooms hot-water bags.

That year, however, December did not happen to be a very propitious one. The doormen were abashed when people spoke to them about the weather, and shrugged their shoulders guiltily, mumbling that they could not recollect such a year, although, to tell the truth, that it was not the first year they mumbled those words, usually adding that "things are terrible everywhere"; that unprecedented showers and storms had broken out on the Riviera, that it was snowing in Athens, that Aetna, too, was all blocked up with snow, and glowed brightly at night, and that tourists were fleeing from Palermo to save themselves from the cold spell. . . .

That winter, the morning sun daily deceived Naples; toward noon the sky would invariably grow gray, and a light rain would begin to fall, growing thicker and duller. Then the palms at the hotel-porch glistened disagreeably like wet tin, the town appeared exceptionally dirty and congested, the museums too monotonous, the cigars of the drivers in their rubber raincoats, which flattened in the wind like wings, intolerably stinking, and the energetic flapping of their whips over their thin-necked nags—obviously false. The shoes of the signors, who cleaned the street-cars tracks, were in a frightful state, the women who splashed in the mud, with black hair unprotected from the rain, were ugly and short legged, and the humidity mingled with the foul smell of rotting fish, that came from the foaming sea, was simply

disheartening. And so, early-morning quarrels began to break out between the Gentleman from San Francisco and his wife; and their daughter now grew pale and suffered from headaches, and now became animated, enthusiastic over everything, and at such times was lovely and beautiful. Beautiful were the tender, complex feelings which her meeting with the ungainly man aroused in her,—the man in whose veins flowed unusual blood, for, after all, it does not matter what in particular stirs up a maiden's soul: money, or fame, or nobility of birth. . . . Everybody assured the tourists that it was quite different at Sorrento and on Capri, that lemon-trees were blossoming there, that it was warmer and sunnier there, the morals purer, and the wine less adulterated. And the family from San Francisco decided to set out with all their luggage for Capri. They planned to settle down at Sorrento, but first to visit the island, tread the stones where stood Tiberius's palaces, examine the fabulous wonders of the Blue Grotto, and listen to the bagpipes of Abruzzi, who roam about the island during the whole month preceding Christmas and sing the praises of the Madonna.

On the day of departure—a very memorable day for the family from San Francisco—the sun did not appear even in the morning. A heavy winter fog covered Vesuvius down to its very base and hung like a gray curtain low over the leaden surge of the sea, hiding it completely at a distance of half a mile. Capri

was completely out of sight, as though it had never existed on this earth. And the little steamboat which was making for the island tossed and pitched so fiercely that the family lay prostrated on the sofas in the miserable cabin of the little steamer, with their feet wrapped in plaids and their eyes shut because of their nausea. The older lady suffered, as she thought, most; several times she was overcome with sea-sickness, and it seemed to her then she was dying, but the chambermaid, who repeatedly brought her the basin, and who for many years, in heat and in cold, had been tossing on these waves, ever on the alert, ever kindly to all,—the chambermaid only laughed. The lady's daughter was frightfully pale and kept a slice of lemon between her teeth. Not even the hope of an unexpected meeting with the prince at Sorrento, where he planned to arrive on Christmas, served to cheer her. The Gentleman from San Francisco, who was lying on his back, dressed in a large overcoat and a big cap, did not loosen his jaws throughout the voyage. His face grew dark, his moustache white, and his head ached heavily; for the last few days, because of the bad weather, he had drunk far too much in the evenings.

And the rain kept on beating against the rattling window panes, and water dripped down from them on the sofas; the howling wind attacked the masts, and sometimes, aided by a heavy sea, it laid the little

steamer on its side, and then something below rolled about with a rattle.

While the steamer was anchored at Castellamare and Sorrento, the situation was more cheerful; but even here the ship rolled terribly, and the coast with all its precipices, gardens and pines, with its pink and white hotels and hazy mountains clad in curling verdure, flew up and down as if it were on swings. The rowboats hit against the sides of the steamer, the sailors and the deck passengers shouted at the top of their voices, and somewhere a baby screamed as if it were being crushed to pieces. A wet wind blew through the door, and from a wavering barge flying the flag of the Hotel Royal, an urchin kept on unwearyingly shouting "Kgoyal-al! Hotel Kgoyal-al! . . ." inviting tourists. And the Gentleman from San Francisco felt like the old man that he was,—and it was with weariness and animosity that he thought of all these "Royals," "Splendids," "Excelsiors," and of all those greedy bugs, reeking with garlic, who are called Italians. Once, during a stop, having opened his eyes and half-risen from the sofa, he noticed in the shadow of the rock beach a heap of stone huts, miserable, mildewed through and through, huddled close by the water, near boats, rags, tin-boxes, and brown fishing nets,—and as he remembered that this was the very Italy he had come to enjoy, he felt a great despair. . . . Finally, in twilight, the black mass of the island began to grow nearer, as though burrowed through at

the base by red fires, the wind grew softer, warmer, more fragrant; from the dock-lanterns huge golden serpents flowed down the tame waves which undulated like black oil. . . . Then, suddenly, the anchor rumbled and fell with a splash into the water, the fierce yells of the boatman filled the air,—and at once everyone's heart grew easy. The electric lights in the cabin grew more brilliant, and there came a desire to eat, drink, smoke, move. . . . Ten minutes later the family from San Francisco found themselves in a large ferry-boat; fifteen minutes later they trod the stones of the quay, and then seated themselves in a small lighted car, which, with a buzz, started to ascend the slope, while vineyard stakes, half-ruined stone fences, and wet, crooked lemon-trees, in spots shielded by straw sheds, with their glimmering orange-colored fruit and thick glossy foliage, were sliding down past the open car windows. . . . After rain, the earth smells sweetly in Italy, and each of her islands has a fragrance of its own.

The Island of Capri was dark and damp on that evening. But for a while it grew animated and let up, in spots, as always in the hour of the steamer's arrival. On the top of the hill, at the station of the *funiculaire,* there stood already the crowd of those whose duty it was to receive properly the Gentleman from San Francisco. The rest of the tourists hardly deserved any attention. There were a few Russians, who had settled on Capri, untidy, absent-minded people, ab-

sorbed in their bookish thoughts, spectacled, bearded, with the collars of their cloth overcoats raised. There was also a company of long-legged, long-necked, round-headed German youths in Tyrolean costume, and with linen bags on their backs, who need no one's services, are everywhere at home, and are by no means liberal in their expenses. The Gentleman from San Francisco, who kept quietly aloof from both the Russians and the Germans, was noticed at once. He and his ladies were hurriedly helped from the car, a man ran before them to show them the way, and they were again surrounded by boys and those thickset Caprean peasant women, who carry on their heads the trucks and valises of wealthy travelers. Their tiny, wooden, foot-stools rapped against the pavement of the small square, which looked almost like an opera square, and over which an electric lantern swung in the damp wind; the gang of urchins whistled like birds and turned somersaults, and as the Gentleman from San Francisco passed among them, it all looked like a stage scene; he went first under some kind of mediaeval archway, beneath houses huddled close together, and then along a steep echoing lane which led to the hotel entrance, flooded with light. At the left, a palm tree raised its tuft above the flat roofs, and higher up, blue stars burned in the black sky. And again things looked as though it was in honor of the guests from San Francisco that the stony damp little town had awakened on its rocky island in the Mediterranean,

that it was they who had made the owner of the hotel so happy and beaming, and that the Chinese gong, which had sounded the call to dinner through all the floors as soon as they entered the lobby, had been waiting only for them.

The owner, an elegant young man, who met the guests with a polite and exquisite bow, for a moment startled the Gentleman from San Francisco. Having caught sight of him, the Gentleman from San Francisco suddenly recollected that on the previous night, among other confused images which disturbed his sleep, he had seen this very man. His vision resembled the hotel keeper to a dot, had the same head, the same hair, shining and scrupulously combed, and wore the same frock-coat with rounded skirts. Amazed, he almost stopped for a while. But as there was not a mustard-seed of what is called mysticism in his heart, his surprise subsided at once; in passing the corridor of the hotel he jestingly told his wife and daughter about this strange coincidence of dream and reality. His daughter alone glanced at him with alarm, longing suddenly compressed her heart, and such a strong feeling of solitude on this strange, dark island seized her that she almost began to cry. But, as usual, she said nothing about her feelings to her father.

A person of high dignity, Rex XVII, who had spent three entire weeks on Capri, had just left the island, and the guests from San Francisco were given the

apartments he had occupied. At their disposal was put the most handsome and skillful chambermaid, a Belgian, with a figure rendered slim and firm by her corset, and with a starched cap, shaped like a small, indented crown; and they had the privilege of being served by the most well-appearing and portly footman, a black, fiery-eyed Sicilian, and by the quickest waiter, the small, stout Luigi, who was a fiend at cracking jokes and had changed many places in his life. Then the maître-d'hôtel, a Frenchman, gently rapped at the door of the American gentleman's room. He came to ask whether the gentleman and the ladies would dine, and in case they would, which he did not doubt, to report that there was to be had that day lobsters, roast beef, asparagus, pheasants, etc., etc.

The floor was still rocking under the Gentleman from San Francisco—so sea-sick had the wretched Italian steamer made him—yet, he slowly, though awkwardly, shut the window which had banged when the maître-d'hôtel entered, and which let in the smell of the distant kitchen and wet flowers in the garden, and answered with slow distinctness, that they would dine, that their table must be placed farther away from the door, in the depth of the hall, that they would have local wine and champagne, moderately dry and but slightly cooled. The maître-d'hôtel approved the words of the guest in various intonations, which all meant, however, only one thing; there is and can be no doubt that the desires of the Gentleman from

San Francisco are right, and that everything would be carried out, in exact conformity with his words. At last he inclined his head and asked delicately:

"Is that all, sir?"

And having received in reply a slow "Yes," he added that to-day they were going to have the tarantella danced in the vestibule by Carmella and Giuseppe, known to all Italy and to "the entire world of tourists."

"I saw her on post-card pictures," said the Gentleman from San Francisco in a tone of voice which expressed nothing. "And this Giuseppe, is he her husband?"

"Her cousin, sir," answered the maître-d'hôtel.

The Gentleman from San Francisco tarried a little, evidently musing on something, but said nothing, then dismissed him with a nod of his head.

Then he started making preparations, as though for a wedding: he turned on all the electric lamps, and filled the mirrors with reflections of light and the sheen of furniture, and opened trunks; he began to shave and to wash himself, and the sound of his bell was heard every minute in the corridor, crossing with other impatient calls which came from the rooms of his wife and daughter. Luigi, in his red apron, with the ease characteristic of stout people, made funny faces at the chambermaids, who were dashing by with tile buckets in their hands, making them laugh until the tears came. He rolled head over heels to the door,

and, tapping with his knuckles, asked with feigned timidity and with an obsequiousness which he knew how to render idiotic:

"Ha sonata, Signore?" (Did you ring, sir?)

And from behind the door a slow, grating, insultingly polite voice, answered:

"Yes, come in."

What did the Gentleman from San Francisco think and feel on that evening forever memorable to him? It must be said frankly: absolutely nothing exceptional. The trouble is that everything on this earth appears too simple. Even had he felt anything deep in his heart, a premonition that something was going to happen, he would have imagined that it was not going to happen so soon, at least not at once. Besides, as is usually the case just after sea-sickness is over, he was very hungry, and he anticipated with real delight the first spoonful of soup, and the first gulp of wine; therefore, he was performing the habitual process of dressing, in a state of excitement which left no time for reflection.

Having shaved and washed himself, and dexterously put in place a few false teeth, he then, standing before the mirror, moistened and vigorously plastered what was left of his thick pearly-colored hair, close to his tawny-yellow skull. Then he put on, with some effort, a tight-fitting undershirt of cream-colored silk, fitted tight to his strong, aged body with its waist swelling out because of an abundant diet; and he pulled black

silk socks and patent-leather dancing shoes on his dry feet with their fallen arches. Squatting down, he set right his black trousers, drawn high by means of silk suspenders, adjusted his snow-white shirt with its bulging front, put the buttons into the shining cuffs, and began the painful process of hunting up the front button under the hard collar. The floor was still swaying under him, the tips of his fingers hurt terribly, the button at times painfully pinched the flabby skin in the depression under his Adam's apple, but he persevered, and finally, with his eyes shining from the effort, his face blue because of the narrow collar which squeezed his neck, he triumphed over the difficulties—and all exhausted, he sat down before the pier-glass, his reflected image repeating itself in all the mirrors.

"It's terrible!" he muttered, lowering his strong, bald head and making no effort to understand what was terrible; then, with a careful and habitual gesture, he examined his short fingers with gouty callosities in the joints, and their large, convex, almond-colored nails, and repeated with conviction, "It's terrible!"

But here the stentorian voice of the second gong sounded throughout the house, as in a heathen temple. And having risen hurriedly, the Gentleman from San Francisco drew his tie more taut and firm around his collar, and pulled together his abdomen by means of a tight waistcoat, put on a dinner-coat, set to rights the cuffs, and for the last time he examined himself in

the mirror. . . . This Carmella, tawny as a mulatto, with fiery eyes, in a dazzling dress in which orange-color predominated, must be an extraordinary dancer, —it occurred to him. And cheerfully leaving his room, he walked on the carpet, to his wife's chamber, and asked in a loud tone of voice if they would be long.

"In five minutes, papa!" answered cheerfully and gaily a girlish voice. "I am combing my hair."

"Very well," said the Gentleman from San Francisco.

And thinking of her wonderful hair, streaming on her shoulders, he slowly walked down along corridors and staircases, spread with red velvet carpets,—looking for the library. The servants he met hugged the walls, and he walked by as if not noticing them. An old lady, late for dinner, already bowed with years, with milk-white hair, yet bare-necked, in a light-gray silk dress, hurried at top speed, but she walked in a mincing, funny, hen-like manner, and he easily overtook her. At the glass door of the dining hall where the guests had already gathered and started eating, he stopped before the table crowded with boxes of matches and Egyptian cigarettes, took a great Manilla cigar, and threw three liras on the table. On the winter veranda he glanced into the open window; a stream of soft air came to him from the darkness, the top of the old palm loomed up before him afar-off, with its boughs spread among the stars and looking gigantic, and the distant even noise of the sea reached

his ear. In the library-room, snug, quiet, a German in round silver-bowed glasses and with crazy, wondering eyes—stood turning the rustling pages of a newspaper. Having coldly eyed him, the Gentleman from San Francisco seated himself in a deep leather arm-chair near a lamp under a green hood, put on his pince-nez and twitching his head because of the collar which choked him, hid himself from view behind a newspaper. He glanced at a few headlines, read a few lines about the interminable Balkan war, and turned over the page with an habitual gesture. Suddenly, the lines blazed up with a glassy sheen, the veins of his neck swelled, his eyes bulged out, the pince-nez fell from his nose. . . . He dashed forward, wanted to swallow air—and made a wild, rattling noise; his lower jaw dropped, dropped on his shoulder and began to shake, the shirt-front bulged out,—and the whole body, writhing, the heels catching in the carpet, slowly fell to the floor in a desperate struggle with an invisible foe. . . .

Had not the German been in the library, this frightful accident would have been quickly and adroitly hushed up. The body of the Gentleman from San Francisco would have been rushed away to some far corner—and none of the guests would have known of the occurrence. But the German dashed out of the library with outcries and spread the alarm all over the house. And many rose from their meal, upsetting chairs, others growing pale, ran along the corridors to

the library, and the question, asked in many languages, was heard: "What is it? What has happened?" And no one was able to answer it clearly, no one understood anything, for until this very day men still wonder most at death and most absolutely refuse to believe in it. The owner rushed from one guest to another, trying to keep back those who were running and soothe them with hasty assurances, that this was nothing, a mere trifle, a little fainting-spell by which a Gentleman from San Francisco, had been overcome. But no one listened to him, many saw how the footmen and waiters tore from the gentleman his tie, collar, waistcoat, the rumpled evening coat, and even —for no visible reason—the dancing shoes from his black silk-covered feet. And he kept on writhing. He obstinately struggled with death, he did not want to yield to the foe that attacked him so unexpectedly and grossly. He shook his head, emitted rattling sounds like one throttled, and turned up his eye-balls like one drunk with wine. When he was hastily brought into Number Forty-three,—the smallest, worst, dampest, and coldest room at the end of the lower corridor,—and stretched on the bed,—his daughter came running, her hair falling over her shoulders, the skirts of her dressing-gown thrown open, with bare breasts raised by the corset. Then came his wife, big, heavy, almost completely dressed for dinner, her mouth round with terror.

In a quarter of an hour all was again in good trim at the hotel. But the evening was irreparably spoiled. Some tourists returned to the dining-hall and finished their dinner, but they kept silent, and it was obvious that they took the accident as a personal insult, while the owner went from one guest to another, shrugging his shoulders in impotent and appropriate irritation, feeling like one innocently victimized, assuring everyone that he understood perfectly well "how disagreeable this is," and giving his word that he would take all "the measures that are within his power" to do away with the trouble. Yet it was found necessary to cancel the tarantella. The unnecessary electric lamps were put out, most of the guests left for the beer-hall, and it grew so quiet in the hotel that one could distinctly hear the tick-tock of the clock in the lobby, where a lonely parrot babbled something in its expressionless manner, stirring in its cage, and trying to fall asleep with its paw clutching the upper perch in a most absurd manner. The Gentleman from San Francisco lay stretched in a cheap iron bed, under coarse woolen blankets, dimly lighted by a single gas-burner fastened in the ceiling. An ice-bag slid down on his wet, cold forhead. His blue, already lifeless face grew gradually cold; the hoarse, rattling noise which came from his mouth, lighted by the glimmer of the golden fillings, gradually weakened. It was not the Gentleman from San Francisco that was emitting those weird sounds; he was no more,—someone else did it. His

wife and daughter, the doctor, the servants were standing and watching him apathetically. Suddenly, that which they expected and feared happened. The rattling sound ceased. And slowly, slowly, in everybody's sight a pallor stole over the face of the dead man, and his features began to grow thinner and more luminous, beautiful with the beauty that he had long shunned and that became him well. . . .

The proprietor entered. "Gia e morto," whispered the doctor to him. The proprietor shrugged his shoulders indifferently. The older lady, with tears slowly running down her cheeks, approached him and said timidly that now the deceased must be taken to his room.

"O no, madam," answered the proprietor politely, but without any amiability and not in English, but in French. He was no longer interested in the trifle which the guests from San Franciso could now leave at his cash-office. "This is absolutely impossible," he said, and added in the form of an explanation that he valued this apartment highly, and if he satisfied her desire, this would become known over Capri and the tourists would begin to avoid it.

The girl, who had looked at him strangely, sat down, and with her handkerchief to her mouth, began to cry. Her mother's tears dried up at once, and her face flared up. She raised her tone, began to demand, using her own language and still unable to realize that the respect for her was absolutely gone. The

proprietor, with polite dignity, cut her short: "If madam does not like the ways of this hotel, he dare not detain her." And he firmly announced that the corpse must leave the hotel that very day, at dawn, that the police had been informed, that an agent would call immediately and attend to all the necessary formalities. . . . "Is it possible to get on Capri at least a plain coffin?" madam asks. . . . Unfortunately not; by no means, and as for making one, there will be no time. It will be necessary to arrange things some other way. . . . For instance, het gets English soda-water in big, oblong boxes. . . . The partitions could be taken out from such a box. . . .

By night, the whole hotel was asleep. A waiter opened the window in Number 43—it faced a corner of the garden where a consumptive banana-tree grew in the shadow of a high stone wall set with broken glass on the top—turned out the electric light, locked the door, and went away. The deceased remained alone in the darkness. Blue stars looked down at him from the black sky, the cricket in the wall started his melancholy, care-free song. In the dimly lighted corridor two chambermaids were sitting on the window-sill, mending something. Then Luigi came in, in slippered feet, with a heap of clothes on his arm.

"Pronto?"—he asked in a stage whisper, as if greatly concerned, directing his eyes toward the terrible door, at the end of the corridor. And waving his free hand in that direction, *"Partenza!"* he cried out in a whis-

per, as if seeing off a train,—and the chambermaids, choking with noiseless laughter, put their heads on each other's shoulders.

Then, stepping softly, he ran to the door, slightly rapped at it, and inclining his ear, asked most obsequiously in a subdued tone of voice:

"Ha sonata, Signore?"

And, squeezing his throat and thrusting his lower jaw forward, he answered himself in a drawling, grating, sad voice, as if from behind the door:

"Yes, come in. . . ."

At dawn, when the window panes in Number Forty-three grew white, and a damp wind rustled in the leaves of the banana-tree, when the pale-blue morning sky rose and stretched over Capri, and the sun, rising from behind the distant mountains of Italy, touched into gold the pure, clearly outlined summit of Monte Solaro, when the masons, who mended the paths for the tourists on the island, went out to their work,—an oblong box was brought to room number forty-three. Soon it grew very heavy and painfully pressed against the knees of the assistant doorman who was conveying it in a one-horse carriage along the white highroad which winded on the slopes, among stone fences and vineyards, all the way down to the sea-coast. The driver, a sickly man, with red eyes, in an old short-sleeved coat and in worn-out shoes, had a drunken headache; all night long he had played dice at the eatinghouse—and he kept on flogging his vigor-

ous little horse. According to Sicilian custom, the animal was heavily burdened with decorations: all sorts of bells tinkled on the bridle, which was ornamented with colored woolen fringes; there were bells also on the edges of the high saddle; and a bird's feather, two feet long, stuck in the trimmed crest of the horse, nodded up and down. The driver kept silence: he was depressed by his wrongheadedness and vices, by the fact that last night he had lost in gambling all the copper coins with which his pockets had been full,—neither more nor less than four liras and forty centesimi. But on such a morning, when the air is so fresh, and the sea stretches nearby, and the sky is serene with a morning serenity,—a headache passes rapidly and one becomes carefree again. Besides, the driver was also somewhat cheered by the unexpected earnings which the Gentleman from San Francisco, who bumped his dead head against the walls of the box behind his back, had brought him. The little steamer, shaped like a great bug, which lay far down, on the tender and brilliant blue filling to the brim the Neapolitan bay, was blowing the signal of departure,—and the sounds swiftly resounded all over Capri. Every bend of the island, every ridge and stone was seen as distinctly as if there were no air between heaven and earth. Near the quay the driver was overtaken by the head doorman who conducted in an auto the wife and daughter of the Gentleman from San Francisco. Their faces were pale and their eyes sunken with tears

and a sleepless night. And in ten minutes the little steamer was again stirring up the water and picking its way toward Sorrento and Castellamare, carrying the American family away from Capri forever. . . . Meanwhile, peace and rest were restored on the island.

Two thousand years ago there had lived on that island a man who became utterly entangled in his own brutal and filthy actions. For some unknown reason he usurped the rule over millions of men and found himself bewildered by the absurdity of this power, while the fear that someone might kill him unawares, made him commit deeds inhuman beyond all measure. And mankind has forever retained his memory, and those who, taken together, now rule the world, as incomprehensibly and, essentially, as cruelly as he did,—come from all the corners of the earth to look at the remnants of the stone house he inhabited, which stands on one of the steepest cliffs of the island. On that wonderful morning the tourists, who had come to Capri for precisely that purpose, were still asleep in the various hotels, but tiny long-eared asses under red saddles were already being led to the hotel entrances. Americans and Germans, men and women, old and young, after having arisen and breakfasted heartily, were to scramble on them, and the old beggar-women of Capri, with sticks in their sinewy hands, were again to run after them along stony, mountainous paths, all the way up to the summit of Monte Tiberia. The dead old man from San Francisco, who

had planned to keep the tourists company but who had, instead, only scared them by reminding them of death, was already shipped to Naples, and soothed by this, the travelers slept soundly, and silence reigned over the island. The stores in the little town were still closed, with the exception of the fish and greens market on the tiny square. Among the plain people who filled it, going about their business, stood idly by, as usual, Lorenzo, a tall old boatman, a carefree reveller and once a handsome man, famous all over Italy, who had many times served as a model for painters. He had brought and already sold—for a song—two big sea-crawfish, which he had caught at night and which were rustling in the apron of Don Cataldo, the cook of the hotel where the family from San Francisco had been lodged,—and now Lorenzo could stand calmly until nightfall, wearing princely airs, showing off his rags, his clay pipe with its long reed mouth-piece, and his red woolen cap, tilted on one ear. Meanwhile, among the precipices of Monte Solare, down the ancient Phoenician road, cut in the rocks in the form of a gigantic staircase, two Abruzzi mountaineers were coming from Anacapri. One carried under his leather mantle a bagpipe, a large goat's skin with two pipes; the other, something in the nature of a wooden flute. They walked, and the entire country, joyous, beautiful, sunny, stretched below them; the rocky shoulders of the island, which lay at their feet, the fabulous blue in which it swam, the shining morning vapors over

the sea westward, beneath the dazzling sun, and the wavering masses of Italy's mountains, both near and distant, whose beauty human word is powerless to render. . . . Midway they slowed up. Overshadowing the road stood, in a grotto of the rock wall of Monte Solare, the Holy Virgin, all radiant, bathed in the warmth and the splendor of the sun. The rust of her snow-white plaster-of-Paris vestures and queenly crown was touched into gold, and there were meekness and mercy in her eyes raised toward the heavens, toward the eternal and beatific abode of her thrice-blessed Son. They bared their heads, applied the pipes to their lips, and praises flowed on, candid and humbly-joyous, praises to the sun and the morning, to Her, the Immaculate Intercessor for all who suffer in this evil and beautiful world, and to Him who had been born of her womb in the cavern of Bethlehem, in a hut of lowly shepherds in distant Judea.

As for the body of the dead Gentleman from San Francisco, it was on its way home, to the shores of the New World, where a grave awaited it. Having undergone many humiliations and suffered much human neglect, having wandered about a week from one port warehouse to another, it finally got on that same famous ship which had brought the family, such a short while ago and with such a pomp, to the Old World. But now he was concealed from the living: in a tar-coated coffin he was lowered deep into the black hold of the steamer. And again did the ship set out on its far

sea journey. At night it sailed by the island of Capri, and, for those who watched it from the island, its lights slowly disappearing in the dark sea, it seemed infinitely sad. But there, on the vast steamer, in its lighted halls shining with brilliance and marble, a noisy dancing party was going on, as usual.

On the second and the third night there was again a ball—this time in mid-ocean, during the furious storm sweeping over the ocean, which roared like a funeral mass and rolled up mountainous seas fringed with mourning silvery foam. The Devil, who from the rocks of Gibraltar, the stony gateway of two worlds, watched the ship vanish into night and storm, could hardly distinguish from behind the snow the innumerable fiery eyes of the ship. The Devil was as huge as a cliff, but the ship was even bigger, a many-storied, many-stacked giant, created by the arrogance of the New Man with the old heart. The blizzard battered the ship's rigging and its broad-necked stacks, whitened with snow, but it remained firm, majestic—and terrible. On its uppermost deck, amidst a snowy whirlwind there loomed up in loneliness the cozy, dimly lighted cabin, where, only half awake, the vessel's ponderous pilot reigned over its entire mass, bearing the semblance of a pagan idol. He heard the wailing moans and the furious screeching of the siren, choked by the storm, but the nearness of that which was behind the wall and which in the last account was incomprehensible to him, removed his fears. He was

reassured by the thought of the large, armored cabin, which now and then was filled with mysterious rumbling sounds and with the dry creaking of blue fires, flaring up and exploding around a man with a metallic headpiece, who was eagerly catching the indistinct voices of the vessels that hailed him, hundreds of miles away. At the very bottom, in the under-water womb of the "Atlantis," the huge masses of tanks and various other machines, their steel parts shining dully, wheezed with steam and oozed hot water and oil; here was the gigantic kitchen, heated by hellish furnaces, where the motion of the vessel was being generated; here seethed those forces terrible in their concentration which were transmitted to the keel of the vessel, and into that endless round tunnel, which was lighted by electricity, and looked like a gigantic cannon barrel, where slowly, with a punctuality and certainty that crushes the human soul, a colossal shaft was revolving in its oily nest, like a living monster stretching in its lair. As for the middle part of the "Atlantis," its warm, luxurious cabins, dining-rooms, and halls, they radiated light and joy, were astir with a chattering smartly-dressed crowd, were filled with the fragrance of fresh flowers, and resounded with a string orchestra. And again did the slender supple pair of hired lovers painfully turn and twist and at times clash convulsively amid the splendor of lights, silks, diamonds, and bare feminine shoulders: she—a sinfully modest pretty girl, with lowered eyelashes

and an innocent hair-dressing, he—a tall, young man, with black hair, looking as if they were pasted, pale with powder, in most exquisite patent-leather shoes, in a narrow, long-skirted dresscoat,—a beautiful man resembling a leech. And no one knew that this couple had long since been weary of torturing themselves with a feigned beatific torture under the sounds of shamefully-melancholy music; nor did any one know what lay deep, deep, beneath them, on the very bottom of the hold, in the neighborhood of the gloomy and sultry maw of the ship, that heavily struggled with the ocean, the darkness, and the storm. . . .

Saidjah

By Multatuli (Edward D. Dekker)

WHEN his father ran away to *Buitenzorg,* Saidjah was about fifteen years old. He refused to go with his father because he had other plans for himself. He had heard that there were rich people in Batavia who would be willing to give a job to a young slender chap like him who could run fast. All he would have to do to earn a fair living was to keep watch on the back seat of their two-wheeled carriages. In a couple of years he would make enough money to buy himself a pair of sturdy buffaloes.

These plans gave him a good deal of pleasure. He strutted along proudly, with chest out, like some important personage who is carrying around weighty thoughts in his head. He was on his way to tell Adinda of his plans.

"We shall be old enough to marry when I come back," he said. "And we'll buy two water buffaloes to plow our land."

"All right, Saidjah, we'll get married when you come back. You'll be plowing the fields, and I'll spin and embroider our clothes."

"I know you will, Adinda. And when I come back, I'll shout for you from a long way off."

"How do you expect me to hear your shouting if we happen to be pounding the rice at the time?"

"That's right. I never thought of that. In that case you'd better wait for me near the *Djati* Forest. Sit down under that *ketapan* tree where you once gave me the *melatti* flower. I'll meet you there."

"But when shall I wait for you? How shall I know when you are going to come to the *ketapan* tree?"

"Just count the moons. First there will be twelve moons, and then there will be another twelve moons, and then there will be another twelve moons. Count three times twelve moons. But don't count this moon. And every time there is a new moon, make a notch with a knife in the rice-block. And then, when there are three times twelve notches in the rice-block, wait for me under the *ketapan* tree. I will come back to you the day you cut the last notch."

"I will wait for you near the *Djati* Forest. I'll sit under the *ketapan* tree."

Saidjah tore a piece of blue cloth from his turban and gave it to Adinda. Then he said good-bye to her and went away.

The first day he passed through Rangas-Betung which was still an insignificant place at the time, and came to Warong-Gunang, where the governor's assistant lived. The next day he reached Pandeglang, a village that lay like a jewel in a garden. The day after that he came to Serang, and he gaped with astonishment as he passed through the streets. How

rich the houses looked, and what a lot of them there were! He rested here for a whole day because he was tired, but as soon as the sun set, he started off again and did not stop until he reached Tangerang. Here he bathed himself in the river and then went to rest up in the house of one of his father's friends.

When it grew dark he took out the *melatti* flower which Adinda had given him. He felt sad when he looked at it because he was so far away from Adinda. He was now beginning to think that three times twelve moons was a very long time indeed. It was very hard for him to go on. He was tired and his ambition was gone.

But he traveled on nevertheless. At last he arrived in Batavia. He had no trouble in getting a job from a rich man, since he could not understand what the rich man said. In Batavia they prefer servants who cannot speak the Malay tongue and who have not been spoiled by contact with the ways of the Europeans.

It took Saidjah but a short time to learn Malay. But he kept the knowledge of it to himself because he was always thinking of Adinda and the two buffaloes. He grew tall and sturdy because he had something to eat every day. In Badur he had often gone hungry.

Soon he was promoted to the position of a regular servant and his pay was raised. But at the end of

three years they called him an ungrateful cuss, because he suddenly threw up his job for no reason at all.

Their blame did not bother Saidjah. He was happy because he could now go back to Adinda. He counted again and again the riches which he was taking home with him. In a hollow bamboo stick he carried his passport and his master's recommendation. Slung over his shoulder and tied by a piece of leather, was a heavy case that beat against his back. But he did not mind the heaviness, for concealed within it were thirty Spanish .dollars. With these thirty dollars he was going to buy, not two buffaloes, but three! Wouldn't Adinda be surprised!

But that was not all. At his belt glittered a Malay *krees* in a silver sheath. It had a carved wooden handle which was carefully wrapped in silk. Thrust into one of the folds of his tunic was a leather girdle with silver links and a gold clasp. This was a present for Adinda. And over his heart, in a little silk purse, he carried the withered *melatti* flower.

He did not stop in any of the cities on his way. It seemed to him all the time that he could hear Adinda calling him. The sound of her voice made him deaf to everything else.

At last he could make out a big black spot in the distance. That must be the *Djati* Forest, and nearby was the tree where Adinda would be waiting for him.

He began to grope in the darkness, running his hands over the trunks of the trees. Soon he felt a

familiar piece of ground under his feet. It was on the south side of a tree. His groping fingers found a gash in the bark. He remembered that this gash had been cut some years ago to drive away an evil spirit that was hiding in the tree and giving the toothache to a number of people in the village.

This, then, was the *ketapan* tree. He sat down at the foot of it and looked up at the stars. He saw a falling star, and he knew it was a greeting to him on his return to Badur. He wondered what Adinda was doing now. Most likely she was asleep. Did she remember to make the right number of notches on the rice-block? Perhaps she had cut one notch too many or too few. Wouldn't that be a pity! He had told told her to count just three times twelve moons! He wondered whether she had spun and embroidered those beautiful cloths. And was there anyone now living in his father's old house? And then he remembered his childhood, and how his mother had taken care of him, and how the buffalo had once saved him from the tiger just as he was about to be torn to pieces.

He watched the setting of the stars in the west, and he tried to figure out how long it would now be before he would see Adinda. The light would soon come from the east, and she would of course be here as soon as the sun rose. Why did she not come the day before? The moment of their meeting had fed his soul

with delight for three long years, and he felt sad that she had not got ahead of this beautiful moment.

But it was foolish to complain. The sun was not up yet, although the stars were growing paler every moment. One by one they were fading out, as though ashamed that their rule must soon be over. A strange mixture of wild colors flickered for an instant over the silent mountain-tops, only to leave them blacker than before. For a moment these fantastic lights fluttered across the clouds that lay heavy in the east. They were like arrows of gold tipped with flame. But having appeared for an instant, they fell back again into the dark clouds that hid the day from his eyes. Slowly the light became more distinct. He could now see the fields and forest, and he could hear the murmuring of the leaves from the trees around him.

Was it possible that Adinda was still asleep? Did she forget that Saidjah was waiting for her? Perhaps the night watchman had just knocked at her door to ask her why she had not put out the lamp. Then, again, she might have sat up all night in the darkness counting the thirty-six notches on the rice-block. Like himself, she must be now waiting for the sun to rise.

He did not want to go to Badur. He looked out over the fields, and on all sides he could see the landscape smiling back to him and welcoming him home. He kept turning his gaze back toward the narrow path over which Adinda would soon come to meet him.

But there was no one on the path. He waited till long after sunrise, and he kept looking and looking, but there was no one on the path. She must have watched all night and then, tired out with her watching, fallen asleep at daybreak. Perhaps it would be best for him after all to go to Badur. She might be ill, perhaps, or even—dead!

At this thought he got up and ran all the way to the village. He heard nothing. He saw nothing. Yet voices were calling him again and again:—"Saidjah! Saidjah!" The women of the village came to their doors, and recognizing Saidjah looked sadly at him. They knew that he had come for Adinda, and that he would not find her there. The governor of the district had taken away her father's buffaloes. This act of cruelty had killed her mother. Her father, afraid that he would be punished because he could not pay the rent for the farm, had run away, taking Adinda with him. But he did not go to Buitenzorg, because in that city they had whipped Saidjah's father for having run away. Instead he went to Lebak on the sea coast, and from there he and Adinda went away somewhere on a ship.

But Saidjah understood nothing of all this that they told him, because his heart was so full of grief.

He left Badur and went to Tjilang Kahan. There he bought a boat and sailed for Campong where there was a rebellion among the people against the tyranny of the Dutch. He joined their army, not so much

because he wanted to fight, but because he hoped in a vague way that he might thus find Adinda.

One day the Dutch soldiers massacred the inhabitants of a certain village which they had captured. Saidjah wandered through the village which was being reduced to ashes. As he was picking his way around one of the houses that had not as yet been burned down completely, he came upon the dead body of Adinda's father. His bared breast showed a recent bayonet wound. A few paces away he found Adinda, naked and dead. A bit of a rag of blue cloth was pressed into the bayonet wound in her breast.

Saidjah saw a soldier, with bayonet ready to thrust, driving a few surviving rebels into the burning shanties. He threw himself upon this soldier and drove his own bayonet through the bully's lungs.

The people of Batavia held a grand celebration over the splendid victory in the East Indies that had brought fresh laurels to the Dutch. The governor wrote home that the inhabitants of Campong were peaceful again. The soldiers were decorated with crosses for bravery and the priests were offering up prayers of thankfulness because the Lord of Hosts, fighting always for the right, had once more fought upon the side of the Dutch.

Montes

By Frank Harris

"YES! I'm better, and the doctor tells me I've escaped once more—as if I cared! . . . And all through the fever you came every day to see me, so my niece says, and brought me the cool drink that drove the heat away and gave me sleep. You thought, I suppose, like the doctor, that I'd escape you, too. Ha! ha! And that you'd never hear old Montes tell what he knows of bull-fighting and you don't. . . . Or perhaps it was kindness; though, why you, a foreigner and a heretic, should be kind to me, God knows. . . . The doctor says I've not got much more life in me, and you're going to leave Spain within the week—within the week, you said, didn't you? . . . Well, then, I don't mind telling you the story.

"Thirty years ago I wanted to tell it often enough, but I knew no one I could trust. After that fit passed, I said to myself I'd never tell it; but as you're going away, I'll tell it to you, if you swear by the Virgin you'll never tell it to any one, at least until I'm dead. You'll swear, will you? Easily enough! they all will; but as you're going away, it's much the same. Besides, you can do nothing now; no one can do anything; they never could have done anything. Why, they wouldn't believe you if you told it to them, the fools! . . . My story will teach you more about bull-fighting than Frascuelo or Mazzantini, or—

yes, Lagartijo knows. Weren't there Frascuelos and Mazzantinis in my day? Dozens of them. You could pick one Frascuelo out of every thousand labourers if you gave him the training and the practice, and could keep him away from wine and women. But a Montes is not to be found every day, if you searched all Spain for one. . . . What's the good of bragging? I never bragged when I was at work; the deed talks—louder than any words. Yet I think, no one has ever done the things I used to do; for I read in a paper once an account of a thing I often did, and the writer said 'twas incredible. Ha! ha! incredible to the Frascuelos and Mazzantinis and the rest, who can kill bulls and are called *espadas*. Oh, yes! bulls so tired out they can't lift their heads. You didn't guess when you were telling me about Frascuelo and Mazzantini that I knew them. I knew all about both of them before you told me. I know their work, though I've not been within sight of a ring for more than thirty years. . . . Well, I'll tell you my story: I'll tell you my story—if I can."

The old man said the last words, as if to himself, in a low voice, then sank back in the armchair, and for a time was silent.

Let me say a word or two about myself and the circumstances which led me to seek out Montes.

I had been in Spain off and on a good deal, and from the first had taken a great liking to the people and country; and no one can love Spain and the Spaniards without becoming interested in the bull-ring—the sport is so

characteristic of the people, and in itself so enthralling. I set myself to study it in earnest, and when I came to know the best bull-fighters, Frascuelo, Mazzantini, and Lagartijo, and heard them talk of their trade, I began to understand what skill and courage, what qualities of eye and hand and heart, this game demands. Through my love of the sport, I came to hear of Montes. He had left so great a name that thirty years after he had disappeared from the scene of his triumphs, he was still spoken of not infrequently. He would perhaps have been better remembered, had the feats attributed to him been less astounding. It was Frascuelo who told me that Montes was still alive:

"Montes," he cried out in answer to me; "I can tell you about Montes. You mean the old *espada* who, they say, used to kill the bull in its first rush into the ring—as if any one could do that! I can tell you about him. He must have been clever; for an old *aficionado* I know, swears no one of us is fit to be in his *cuadrilla*. Those old fellows are all like that, and I don't believe half they tell about Montes. I dare say he was good enough in his day, but there are just as good men now as ever there were. When I was in Ronda, four years ago, I went to see Montes. He lives out of the town in a nice, little house all alone, with one woman to attend to him, a niece of his, they say. You know he was born in Ronda; but he would not talk to me; he only looked at me and laughed—the little, lame, conceited one!"

"You don't believe then, in spite of what they say, that he was better than Lagartijo or Mazzantini," I asked.

"No, I don't," Frascuelo replied. "Of course, he may have known more than they do; that wouldn't be difficult, for neither of them knows much. Mazzantini is a good *matador* because he's very tall and strong—that's his advantage. For that, too, the women like him, and when he makes a mistake and has to try again, he gets forgiven. It wasn't so when I began. There were *aficionados* then, and if you made a mistake they began to jeer, and you were soon pelted out of the ring. Now the crowd knows nothing and is no longer content to follow those who do know. Lagartijo? Oh! he's very quick and daring, and the women and boys like that too. But he's ignorant: he knows nothing about a bull. Why, he's been wounded oftener in his five years than I in my twenty. And that's a pretty good test. Montes must have been clever; for he's very small, and I shouldn't think he was ever very strong, and then he was lame almost from the beginning, I've heard. I've no doubt he could teach the business to Mazzantini or Lagartijo, but that's not saying much. . . . He must have made a lot of money, too, to be able to live on it ever since. And they didn't pay as high then or even when I began as they do now."

So much I knew about Montes when, in the spring of 188—, I rode from Seville to Ronda, fell in love with the place at first sight, and resolved to stop at Polos' inn for some time. Ronda is built, so to speak, upon an island tableland high above the sea-level, and is ringed

about by still higher mountain ranges. It is one of the most peculiar and picturesque places in the world. A river runs almost all around it; and the sheer cliffs fall in many places three or four hundred feet, from the tableland to the water, like a wall. No wonder that the Moors held Ronda after they had lost every other foot of ground in Spain. Taking Ronda as my headquarters I made almost daily excursions, chiefly on foot, into the surrounding mountains. On one of these I heard again of Montes. A peasant with whom I had been talking and who was showing me a short cut back to the town, suddenly stopped and said, pointing to a little hut perched on the mountain-shoulder in front of us, "From that house you can see Ronda. That's the house where Montes, the great *matador,* was born," he added, evidently with some pride. Then and there the conversation with Frascuelo came back to my memory, and I made up my mind to find Montes out and have a talk with him. I went to his house, which lay just outside the town, next day with the *alcalde,* who introduced me to him and then left us. The first sight of the man interested me. He was short—about five feet three or four, I should think—of well-knit, muscular frame. He seemed to me to have Moorish blood in him. His complexion was very dark and tanned; the features clean-cut; the nose sharp and inquisitive; the nostrils astonishingly mobile; the chin and jaws square, bony—resolute. His hair and thick moustache were snow-white, and this, together with the deep wrinkles on the forehead and round the eyes and

mouth, gave him an appearance of great age. He seemed to move, too, with extreme difficulty, his lameness, as he afterwards told me, being complicated with rheumatism. But when one looked at his eyes, the appearance of age vanished. They were large and brown, usually inexpressive, or rather impenetrable, brooding wells of unknown depths. But when anything excited him, the eyes would suddenly flash to life and become intensely luminous. The effect was startling. It seemed as if all the vast vitality of the man had been transmuted into those wonderful gleaming orbs: they radiated courage, energy, intellect. Then as his mood changed, the light would die out of the eyes, and the old, wizened wrinkled face would settle down into its ordinary ill-tempered, wearied expression. There was evidently so much in the man—courage, melancholy, keen intelligence—that in spite of an anything but flattering reception I returned again and again to the house. One day his niece told me that Montes was in bed, and from her description I inferred that he was suffering from an attack of malarial fever. The doctor who attended him, and whom I knew, confirmed this. Naturally enough, I did what I could for the sufferer, and so it came about that after his recovery he received me with kindness, and at last made up his mind to tell me the story of his life.

"I may as well begin at the beginning," Montes went on. "I was born near here about sixty years ago. You thought I was older. Don't deny it. I saw the surprise in your face. But it's true: in fact, I am not yet, I think,

quite sixty. My father was a peasant with a few acres of land of his own and a cottage."

"I know it," I said. "I saw it the other day."

"Then you may have seen on the further side of the hill the pasture-ground for cattle which was my father's chief possession. It was good pasture; very good. . . . My mother was of a better class than my father; she was the daughter of the chemist in Ronda; she could read and write, and she did read, I remember, whenever she could get the chance, which wasn't often, with her four children to take care of—three girls and a boy—and the house to look after. We all loved her, she was so gentle; besides, she told us wonderful stories; but I think I was her favorite. You see I was the youngest and a boy, and women are like that. My father was hard—at least, I thought him so, and feared rather than loved him; but the girls got on better with him. He never talked to me as he did to them. My mother wanted me to go to school and become a priest; she had taught me to read and write by the time I was six. By my father would not hear of it. 'If you had had three boys and one girl,' I remember him saying to her once, 'you could have done what you liked with this one. But as there is only one boy, he must work and help me.' So by the time I was nine I used to go off down to the pasture and watch the bulls all day long. For though the herd was a small one—only about twenty head—it required to be constantly watched. The cows were attended to in an enclosure close to the house. It was my task to mind the bulls in the lower

pasture. Of course I had a pony, for such bulls in Spain are seldom approached, and cannot be driven by a man on foot. I see you don't understand. But it's simple enough. My father's bulls were of good stock, savage and strong; they were always taken for the ring, and he got high prices for them. He generally managed to sell three *novillos* and two bulls of four years old each year. And there was no bargaining, no trouble; the money was always ready for that class of animal. All day long I sat on my pony, or stood near it, minding the bulls. If any of them strayed too far, I had to go and get him back again. But in the heat of the day they never moved about much, and that time I turned to use by learning the lessons my mother gave me. So a couple of years passed. Of course in that time I got to know our bulls pretty well; but it was a remark of my father's which first taught me that each bull had an individual character and first set me to watch them closely. I must have been then about twelve years old; and in that summer I learned more than in the two previous years. My father, though he said nothing to me, must have noticed that I had gained confidence in dealing with the bulls; for one night, when I was in bed, I heard him say to my mother—'The little fellow is as good as a man now.' I was proud of his praise, and from that time on, I set to work to learn everything I could about the bulls.

"By degrees I came to know every one of them—better far than I ever got to know men or women later. Bulls, I found, were just like men, only simpler and kinder;

some were good tempered and honest, others were sulky and cunning. There was a black one which was wild and hot-tempered, but at bottom, good, while there was one almost as black, with light horns and flanks, which I never trusted. The other bulls didn't like him. I could see they didn't; they were all afraid of him. He was cunning and suspicious, and never made friends with any of them; he would always eat by himself far away from the others—but he had courage, too; I knew that as well as they did. He was sold that very summer with the black one for the ring in Ronda. One Sunday night, when my father and eldest sister (my mother would never go to *los toros*) came back from seeing the game in Ronda, they were wild with excitement, and began to tell the mother how one of our bulls had caught the *matador* and tossed him, and how the *chulos* could scarcely get the *matador* away. Then I cried out—'I know; 'twas Judas' (so I had christened him), and as I saw my father's look of surprise I went on confusedly, 'the bull with the white horns I mean. Juan, the black one, wouldn't have been clever enough.' My father only said, 'The boy's right'; but my mother drew me to her and kissed me, as if she were afraid. . . . Poor mother! I think even then she knew or divined something of what came to pass later. . . .

"It was the next summer, I think, that my father first found out how much I knew about the bulls. It happened in this way. There hadn't been much rain in the spring; the pasture, therefore, was thin, and that, of course, made the bulls restless. In the summer the weather was un-

settled—spells of heat and then thunderstorms—till the animals became very excitable. One day, there was thunder in the air, I remember, they gave me a great deal of trouble and that annoyed me, for I wanted to read. I had got to a very interesting tale in the story-book my mother had given me on the day our bulls were sold. The story was about Cervantes—ah, you know who I mean, the great writer. Well, he was a great man, too. The story told how he escaped from the prison over there in Algiers and got back to Cadiz, and how a widow came to him to find out if he knew her son, who was also a slave of the Moors. And when she heard that Cervantes had seen her son working in chains, she bemoaned her wretchedness and ill-fortune, till the heart of the great man melted with pity, and he said to her, 'Come, mother, be hopeful, in one month your son shall be here with you.' And then the book told how Cervantes went back to slavery, and how glad the Bey was to get him again, for he was very clever; and how he asked the Bey, as he had returned of his free will, to send the widow's son home in his stead; and the Bey consented. That Cervantes was a man! . . . Well, I was reading the story, and I believed every word of it, as I do still, for no ordinary person could invent that sort of tale; and I grew very much excited and wanted to know all about Cervantes. But as I could only read slowly and with difficulty, I was afraid the sun would go down before I could get to the end. While I was reading as hard as ever I could, my father came down on foot and caught me. He hated to see me

reading—I don't know why; and he was angry and struck at me. As I avoided the blow and got away from him, he pulled up the picket line, and got on my pony to drive one of the bulls back to the herd. I have thought since, he must have been very much annoyed before he came down and caught me. For though he knew a good deal about bulls, he didn't show it then. My pony was too weak to carry him easily, yet he acted as if he had been well mounted. For as I said, the bulls were hungry and excited, and my father should have seen this and driven the bull back quietly and with great patience. But no; he wouldn't let him feed even for a moment. At last the bull turned on him. My father held the goad fairly against his neck, but the bull came on just the same, and the pony could scarcely get out of the way in time. In a moment the bull turned and prepared to rush at him again. My father sat still on the little pony and held the goad; but I knew that was no use; he knew it, too; but he was angry and wouldn't give in. At once I ran in between him and the bull, and then called to the bull, and went slowly up to him where he was shaking his head and pawing the ground. He was very angry, but he knew the difference between us quite well, and he let me come close to him without rushing at me, and then just shook his head to show me he was still angry, and soon began to feed quietly. In a moment or two I left him and went back to my father. He had got off the pony and was white and trembling, and he said,

"'Are you hurt?'

"And I said laughing, 'No: he didn't want to hurt me. He was only showing off his temper.'

"And my father said, 'There's not a man in all Spain that could have done that! You know more than I do—more than anybody.'

"After that he let me do as I liked, and the next two years were very happy ones. First came the marriage of my second sister; then the eldest one was married, and they were both good matches. And the bulls sold well, and my father had less to do, as I could attend to the whole herd by myself. Those were two good years. My mother seemed to love me more and more every day, or I suppose I noticed it more, and she praised me for doing the lessons she gave me; and I had more and more time to study as the herd got to know me better and better.

"My only trouble was that I had never seen the bulls in the ring. But when I found my father was willing to take me, and 'twas mother who wanted me not to go, I put up with that, too, and said nothing, for I loved her greatly. Then of a sudden came the sorrow. It was in the late winter, just before my fifteenth birthday. I was born in March, I think. In January my mother caught cold, and as she grew worse my father fetched the doctor, and then her father and mother came to see her, but nothing did any good. In April she died. I wanted to die, too.

"After her death my father took to grumbling about the food and house and everything. Nothing my sister could do was right. I believe she only married in the summer because she couldn't stand his constant blame.

At any rate she married badly, a good-for-nothing who had twice her years, and who ill-treated her continually. A month or two later my father, who must have been fifty, married again, a young woman, a laborer's daughter without a *duro*. He told me he was going to do it, for the house needed a woman. I suppose he was right. But I was too young then to take such things into consideration, and I had loved my mother. When I saw his new wife I did not like her, and we did not get on well together.

"Before this, however, early in the summer that followed the death of my mother, I went for the first time to see a bull-fight. My father wanted me to go, and my sister, too; so I went. I shall never forget that day. The *chulos* made me laugh, they skipped about so and took such extra good care of themselves; but the *banderilleros* interested me. Their work required skill and courage, that I saw at once; but after they had planted the *banderillas* twice, I knew how it was done, and felt I could do it just as well or better. For the third or fourth *banderillero* made a mistake! He didn't even know with which horn the bull was going to strike; so he got frightened, and did not plant the *banderillas* fairly—in fact, one was on the side of the shoulder and the other didn't even stick in. As for the *picadores,* they didn't interest me at all. There was no skill or knowledge in their work. It was for the crowd, who liked to see blood and who understand nothing. Then came the turn of the *espada.* Ah! that seemed splendid to me. He knew his

work I thought at first, and his work evidently required knowledge, skill, courage, strength—everything. I was intensely excited, and when the bull, struck to the heart, fell prone on his knees, and the blood gushed from his nose and mouth, I cheered and cheered till I was hoarse. But before the games were over, that very first day, I saw more than one *matador* make a mistake. At first I thought I must be wrong, but soon the event showed I was right. For the *matador* hadn't even got the bull to stand square when he tried his stroke and failed. You don't know what that means—'to stand square.'"

"I do partly," I replied, "but I don't see the reason of it. Will you explain?"

"It's very simple," Montes answered. "So long as the bull's standing with one hoof in front of the other, his shoulder-blades almost meet, just as when you throw your arms back and your chest out; they don't meet, of course, but the space between them is not as regular, and, therefore, not as large as it is when their front hooves are square. The space between the shoulder-blades is none too large at any time, for you have to strike with force to drive the sword through the inch-thick hide, and through a foot of muscle, sinew, and flesh, besides to the heart. Nor is the stroke a straight one. Then, too, there's always the backbone to avoid. And the space between the backbone and the nearest thick gristle of the shoulder-blade is never more than an inch and a half. So if you narrow this space by even half an inch you increase your difficulty immensely. And that's not your

object. Well, all this I've been telling you, I divined at once. Therefore, when I saw the bull wasn't standing quite square I knew the *matador* was either a bungler or else very clever and strong indeed. In a moment he proved himself to be a bungler, for his sword turned on the shoulder-blade, and the bull, throwing up his head, almost caught him on his horns. Then I hissed and cried, 'Shame!' And the people stared at me. That butcher tried five times before he killed the bull, and at last even the most ignorant of the spectators knew I had been right in hissing him. He was one of your Mazzantinis, I suppose."

"Oh, no!" I replied, "I've seen Mazzantini try twice, but never five times. That's too much!"

"Well," Montes continued quietly, "the man who tries once and fails ought never to be allowed in a ring again. But to go on. That first day taught me I could be an *espada*. The only doubt in my mind was in regard to the nature of the bulls. Should I be able to understand new bulls—bulls, too, from different herds and of different race, as well as I understood our bulls? Going home that evening I tried to talk to my father, but he thought the sport had been very good, and when I wanted to show him the mistakes the *matadores* had made, he laughed at me, and, taking hold of my arm, he said, 'Here's where you need the gristle before you could kill a bull with a sword, even if he were tied for you.' My father was very proud of his size and strength, but what he said had reason in it, and made me doubt myself. Then he talked

about the gains of the *matadores*. A fortune, he said, was given for a single day's work. Even the pay of the *chulos* seemed to me to be extravagant, and a *banderillero* got enough to make one rich for life. That night I thought over all I had seen and heard, and fell asleep and dreamt I was an *espada,* the best in Spain, and rich, and married to a lovely girl with golden hair—as boys do dream.

"Next day I set myself to practice with our bulls. First I teased one till he grew angry and rushed at me; then, as a *chulo,* I stepped aside. And after I had practised this several times, I began to try to move aside as late as possible and only just as far as was needful; for I soon found out the play of horn of every bull we had. The older the bull the heavier his neck and shoulders become and, therefore, the sweep of horns in an old bull is much smaller than a young one's. Before the first morning's sport was over I knew that with our bulls at any rate I could beat any *chulo* I had seen the day before. Then I set myself to quiet the bulls, which was a little difficult, and after I had succeeded I went back to my pony to read and dream. Next day I played at being a *banderillero,* and found out at once that my knowledge of the animal was all important. For I knew always on which side to move to avoid the bull's rush. I knew how he meant to strike by the way he put his head down. To plant the *banderillas* perfectly would have been child's play to me, at least with our bulls. The *matador's* work was harder to practice. I had no sword; besides, the

bull I wished to pretend to kill, was not tired and wouldn't keep quiet. Yet I went on trying. The game had a fascination for me. A few days later, provided with a makeshift red *capa,* I got a bull far away from the others. Then I played with him till he was tired out. First I played as a *chulo,* and avoided his rushes by an inch or two only; then, as *banderillero,* I escaped his stroke, and, as I did so, struck his neck with two sticks. When he was tired I approached him with the *capa* and found I could make him do what I pleased, stand crooked or square in a moment, just as I liked. For I learned at once that as a rule the bull rushes at the *capa* and not at the man who holds it. Some bulls, however, are clever enough to charge the man. For weeks I kept up this game, till one day my father expressed his surprise at the thin and wretched appearance of the bulls. No wonder! The pasture ground had been a ring to them and me for many a week.

"After this I had to play *matador*—the only part which had any interest for me—without first tiring them. Then came a long series of new experiences, which in time made me what I was, a real *espada,* but which I can scarcely describe to you.

"For power over wild animals comes to a man, as it were, by leaps and bounds. Of a sudden one finds he can make a bull do something which the day before he could not make him do. It is all a matter of intimate knowledge of the nature of the animal. Just as the shepherd, as I've been told, knows the face of each sheep in a

flock of a thousand, though I can see no difference between the faces of sheep, which are all alike stupid to me, so I came to know bulls, with a complete understanding of the nature and temper of each one. It's just because I can't tell you how I acquired this part of my knowledge that I was so long-winded in explaining to you my first steps. That I knew more than I have told you, will appear as I go on with my story, and that you must believe or disbelieve as you think best."

"Oh," I cried, "you've explained everything so clearly, and thrown light on so many things I didn't understand, that I shall believe whatever you tell me."

Old Montes went on as if he hadn't heard my protestation:

"The next three years were intolerable to me: my stepmother repaid my dislike with interest and found a hundred ways of making me uncomfortable, without doing anything I could complain of and get altered. In the spring of my nineteenth year I told my father I intended to go to Madrid and become an *espada*. When he found he couldn't induce me to stay, he said I might go. We parted, and I walked to Seville; there I did odd jobs for a few weeks in connection with the bull-ring, such as feeding the bulls, helping to separate them, and so forth; and there I made an acquaintance who was afterwards a friend. Juan Valdera was one of the *cuadrilla* of Girvalda, a *matador* of the ordinary type. Juan was from Estramadura, and we could scarcely understand each other at first; but he was kindly and careless and I

took a great liking to him. He was a fine man; tall, strong and handsome, with short, dark, wavy hair and dark moustache, and great black eyes. He liked me, I suppose, because I admired him and because I never wearied of hearing him tell of his conquests among women and even great ladies. Of course I told him I wished to enter the ring, and he promised to help me to get a place in Madrid where he knew many of the officials. 'You may do well with the *capa,*' I remember he said condescendingly, 'or even as a *banderillero,* but you'll never go further. You see, to be an *espada,* as I intend to be, you must have height and strength,' and he stretched his fine figure as he spoke. I acquiesced humbly enough. I felt that perhaps he and my father were right, and I didn't know whether I should ever have strength enough for the task of an *espada.* To be brief, I saved a little money, and managed to get to Madrid late in the year, too late for the bull-ring. Thinking over the matter I resolved to get work in a blacksmith's shop, and at length succeeded. As I had thought, the labor strengthened me greatly, and in the spring of my twentieth year, by Juan's help, I got employed on trial one Sunday as a *chulo.*

* * * * * * *

"I suppose," Montes went on, after a pause, "I ought to have been excited and nervous on that first Sunday—but I wasn't; I was only eager to do well in order to get engaged for the season. The blacksmith, Antonio, whom I had worked with, had advanced me the money for my

costume, and Juan had taken me to a tailor and got the things made, and what I owed Antonio and the tailor weighed on me. Well, on that Sunday I was a failure at first. I went in the procession with the rest, then with the others I fluttered my *capa;* but when the bull rushed at me, instead of running away, like the rest, I wrapped my *capa* about me and, just as his horns were touching me, I moved aside—not half a pace. The spectators cheered me, it is true, and I thought I had done very well, until Juan came over to me, and said:

" 'You mustn't show off like that. First of all, you'll get killed if you play that game; and then you fellows with the *capa* are there to make the bull run about to tire him out so that we *matadores* may kill him.'

"That was my first lesson in professional jealousy. After that I ran about like the rest, but without much heart in the sport. It seemed to me stupid. Besides, from Juan's anger and contempt, I felt sure I shouldn't get a permanent engagement. Bit by bit, however, my spirits rose again with the exercise, and when the fifth or sixth bull came in, I resolved to make him run. It was a good, honest bull; I saw that at once; he stood in the middle of the ring, excited, but not angry, in spite of the waving of the *capas* all around him. As soon as my turn came, I ran forward, nearer to him than the others had considered safe, and waved the challenge with my *capa.* At once he rushed at it, and I gave him a long run, half round the circle and ended it by stopping and letting him toss the *capa* which I held not quite

at arm's length from my body. As I did this I didn't turn round to face him. I knew he'd toss the *capa* and not me, but the crowd rose and cheered as if the thing were extraordinary. Then I felt sure I should be engaged, and I was perfectly happy. Only Juan said to me a few minutes later:

"'You'll be killed, my boy, one of these fine days if you try those games. Your life will be a short one if you begin by trusting a bull.'

"But I didn't mind what he said. I thought he meant it as a friendly warning, and I was anxious only to get permanently engaged. And sure enough, as soon as the games were over, I was sent for by the director. He was kind to me, and asked me where I had played before. I told him that was my first trial.

"'Ah!' he said, turning to a gentleman who was with him, 'I knew it, Señor Duque; such courage always comes from—want of experience, let me call it.'

"'No,' replied the gentleman, whom I afterwards knew as the Duke of Medina Celi, the best *aficionado*, and one of the noblest men in Spain; 'I'm not so sure of that. Why,' he went on, speaking now to me, 'did you keep your back turned to the bull?'

"'Señor,' I answered, 'twas an honest bull, and not angry, and I knew he'd toss the *capa* without paying any attention to me.'

"'Well,' said the Duke, 'if you know that much, and aren't afraid to risk your life on your knowledge, you'll go far. I must have a talk with you some day, when

I've more time; you can come and see me. Send in your name; I shall remember.' And as he said this, he nodded to me and waved his hand to the director, and went away.

"Then and there the director made me sign an engagement for the season, and gave me one hundred *duros* as earnest money in advance of my pay. What an evening we had after that! Juan, the tailor; Antonio, the blacksmith, and I. How glad and proud I was to be able to pay my debts and still have sixty *duros* in my pocket after entertaining my friends. If Juan had not hurt me every now and then by the way he talked of my foolhardiness, I should have told them all I knew; but I didn't. I only said I was engaged at a salary of a hundred *duros* a month.

"'What!' said Juan. 'Come, tell the truth; make it fifty.'

"'No,' I said; 'it was a hundred,' and I pulled out the money.

"'Well,' he said, 'that only shows what it is to be small and young and foolhardy! Here am I, after six years' experience, second, too, in the *cuadrilla* of Girvalda, and I'm not getting much more than that.'

"Still, in spite of such little drawbacks, in spite, too, of the fact that Juan had to go away early, to meet 'a lovely creature,' as he said, that evening was one of the happiest I ever spent.

"All that summer through I worked every Sunday, and grew in favour with the Madrileños, and with the Madrileñas, though not with these in Juan's way. I was

timid and young; besides, I had a picture of a woman in my mind, and I saw no one like it. So I went on studying the bulls, learning all I could about the different breeds, and watching them in the ring. Then I sent money to my sister and to my father, and was happy.

"In the winter I was a good deal with Antonio; every day I did a spell of work in his shop to strengthen myself, and he, I think, got to know that I intended to become an *espada*. At any rate, after my first performance with the *capa*, he believed I could do whatever I wished. He used often to say God had given him strength and me brains, and he only wished he could exchange some of his muscles for some of my wits. Antonio was not very bright, but he was good-tempered, kind, and hard-working, the only friend I ever had. May Our Lady give his soul rest!

"Next spring when the director sent for me, I said that I wanted to work as a *banderillero*. He seemed to be surprised, told me I was a favorite with the *capa*, and had better stick to that for another season at least. But I was firm. Then he asked me whether I had ever used the *banderillas* and where? The director always believed I had been employed in some other ring before I came to Madrid. I told him I was confident I could do the work. 'Besides,' I added, 'I want more pay,' which was an untruth; but the argument seemed to him decisive, and he engaged me at two hundred *duros* a month, under the condition that, if the spectators wished it, I should work now and then with the *capa* as well. It didn't take me

long to show the *aficionados* in Madrid that I was as good with the *banderillas* as I was with the *capa*. I could plant them when and where I liked. For in this season I found I could make the bull do almost anything. You know how the *banderillero* has to excite the bull to charge him before he can plant the darts. He does that to make the bull lower his head well, and he runs towards the bull partly so that the bull may not know when to toss his head up, partly because he can throw himself aside more easily when he's running fairly fast. Well, again and again I made the bull lower his head and then walked to him, planted the *banderillas,* and as he struck upwards swayed aside just enough to avoid the blow. That was an infinitely more difficult feat than anything I had ever done with the *capa,* and it gave me reputation among the *aficionados* and also with the *espadas;* but the ignorant herd of spectators preferred my trick with the *capa*. So the season came and went. I had many a carouse with Juan, and gave him money from time to time, because women always made him spend more than he got. From that time, too, I gave my sister fifty *duros* a month, and my father fifty. For before the season was half over my pay was raised to four hundred *duros* a month, and my name was always put on the bills. In fact I was rich and a favourite of the public.

"So time went on, and my third season in Madrid began, and with it came the beginning of the end. Never was any one more absolutely content than I when we were told *los toros* would begin in a fortnight. On the

first Sunday I was walking carelessly in the procession beside Juan, though I could have been next to the *espadas,* had I wished, when he suddenly nudged me, saying:

"'Look up! there on the second tier; there's a face for you.'

"I looked up, and saw a girl with the face of my dreams, only much more beautiful. I suppose I must have stopped, for Juan pulled me by the arm crying: 'You're moonstruck, man; come on!' and on I went—lovestruck in heart and brain and body. What a face it was! The golden hair framed it like a picture, but the great eyes were hazel, and the lips scarlet, and she wore the *mantilla* like a queen. I moved forward like a man in a dream, conscious of nothing that went on round me, till I heard Juan say:

"'She's looking at us. She knows we've noticed her. All right, pretty one! We'll make friends afterwards.'

"'But how?' I asked, stupidly.

"'How!' he replied, mockingly. 'I'll just send some one to find out who she is, and then you can send her a box for next Sunday, and pray for her acquaintance, and the thing's done. I suppose that's her mother sitting behind her,' he went on. 'I wonder if the other girl next to her is her sister. She's as good-looking as the fair-haired one, and easier to win, I'd bet. Strange how all the timid ones take to me.' And again he looked up.

"I said nothing; nor did I look up at the place where she was sitting; but I worked that day as I had never worked before. Then, for the first time, I did some-

thing that has never been done since by any one. The first bull was honest and kindly: I knew the sort. So, when the people began to call for *El Pequeño* (the little fellow)—that was the nickname they had given me—I took up a *capa*, and, when the bull chased me, I stopped suddenly, faced him, and threw the *capa* round me. He was within ten paces of me before he saw I had stopped, and he began to stop; but before he came to a standstill his horns were within a foot of me. He tossed his head once or twice as if he would strike me, and then went off. The people cheered and cheered as if they would never cease. Then I looked up at her. She must have been watching me, for she took the red rose from her hair and threw it into the ring towards me, crying, 'Bien! Muy bien! El Pequeño!'

"As I picked up the rose, pressed it to my lips, and hid it in my breast, I realized all that life holds of triumphant joy! . . . Then I made up my mind to show what I could do, and everything I did that day seemed to delight the public. At last, as I planted the *banderillas*, standing in front of the bull, and he tried twice in quick succession to strike me and failed, the crowd cheered and cheered and cheered, so that, even when I went away, after bowing and stood among my fellows, ten minutes passed before they would let the game go on. I didn't look up again. No! I wanted to keep the memory of what she looked like when she threw me the rose.

"After the games were over, I met her, that same evening. Juan had brought it about, and he talked easily

enough to the mother and daughter and niece, while I listened. We all went, I remember, to a restaurant in the Puerta del Sol, and ate and drank together. I said little or nothing the whole evening. The mother told us they had just come from the north: Alvareda was the family name; her daughter was Clemencia, the niece, Liberata. I heard everything in a sort of fever of hot pulses and cold fits of humility, while Juan told them all about himself, and what he meant to do and be. While Clemencia listened to him, I took my fill of gazing at her. At last Juan invited them all to *los toros* on the following Sunday, and promised them the best *palco* in the ring. He found out, too, where they lived, in a little street running parallel to the Alcala, and assured them of our visit within the week. Then they left, and as they went out of the door Liberata looked at Juan, while Clemencia chatted with him and teased him.

"'That's all right,' said Juan, turning to me when they were gone, 'and I don't know which is the more taking, the niece or Clemencia. Perhaps the niece; she looks at one so appealingly; and those who talk so with their eyes are always the best. I wonder have they any money? One might do worse than either with a good portion.'

"'Is that your real opinion?' I asked hesitatingly.

"'Yes,' he answered; 'why?'

"'Because, in that case leave Clemencia to me. Of course you could win her if you wanted to. But it makes no difference to you, and to me all the difference. If I cannot marry her, I shall never marry.'

"'Gesu!' he cried, 'how fast you go, but I'd do more than that for you, Montes; and besides, the niece really pleases me better.'

"So the matter was settled between us.

"Now, if I could tell you all that happened, I would. But much escaped me at the time that I afterwards remembered, and many things that then seemed to me to be as sure as a straight stroke, have since grown confused. I only know that Juan and I met them often, and that Juan paid court to the niece, while I from time to time talked timidly to Clemencia.

"One Sunday after another came and went, and we grew to know each other well. Clemencia did not chatter like other women: I liked her the better for it, and when I came to know she was very proud, I liked that too. She charmed me; why? I can scarcely tell. I saw her faults gradually, but even her faults appeared to me fascinating. Her pride was insensate. I remember one Sunday afternoon after the games, I happened to go into a restaurant, and found her sitting there with her mother. I was in costume and carried in my hand a great nosegay of roses that a lady had thrown me in the ring. Of course as soon as I saw Clemencia I went over to her and—you know it is the privilege of the *matadores* in Spain, even if they do not know the lady—taking a rose from the bunch I presented it to her as the fairest of the fair. Coming from the cold North, she didn't know the custom and scarcely seemed pleased. When I explained it to her, she exclaimed that it was monstrous; she'd never allow a mere

matador to take such a liberty unless she knew and liked him. Juan expostulated with her laughingly; I said nothing; I knew what qualities our work required, and didn't think it needed any defence. I believe in that first season, I came to see that her name Clemencia wasn't very appropriate. At any rate she had courage and pride, that was certain. Very early in our friendship she wanted to know why I didn't become an *espada*.

" 'A man without ambition,' she said, 'was like a woman without beauty.'

"I laughed at this and told her my ambition was to do my work well, and advancement was sure to follow in due course. Love of her seemed to have killed ambition in me. But no. She wouldn't rest content in spite of Juan's telling her my position already was more brilliant than that of most of the *espadas*.

" 'He does things with the *capa* and the *banderillas* which no *espada* in all Spain would care to imitate. And that's position enough. Besides, to be an *espada* requires height and strength.'

"As he said this she seemed to be convinced, but it annoyed me a little, and afterwards as we walked together, I said to her,

" 'If you want to see me work as an *espada*, you shall.'

" 'Oh, no!' she answered half carelessly; 'if you can't do it, as Juan says, why should you try? To fail is worse than to lack ambition.'

" 'Well,' I answered, 'you shall see.'

"And then I took my courage in both hands and went on:

"'If you cared for me I should be the first *espada* in the world next season.'

"She turned and looked at me curiously and said,

"'Of course I'd wish it if you could do it.'

"And I said, 'See, I love you as the priest loves the Virgin; tell me to be an *espada* and I shall be one for the sake of your love.'

"'That's what all men say, but love doesn't make a man tall and strong.'

"'No; nor do size and strength take the place of heart and head. Do you love me? That's the question.'

"'I like you, yes. But love—love, they say, comes after marriage.'

"'Will you marry me?'

"'Become an *espada* and then ask me again,' she answered coquettishly.

"The very next day I went to see the Duke of Medina Celi; the servants would scarcely let me pass till they heard my name and that the Duke had asked me to come. He received me kindly. I told him what I wanted.

"'Have you ever used the sword?' he asked in surprise. 'Can you do it? You see we don't want to lose the best man with *capa* and *banderillas* ever known, to get another second-class *espada*.'

"And I answered him,

"'Señor Duque, I have done better with the *banderillas* than I could with the *capa*. I shall do better with the *espada* than with the *banderillas*.'

"'You little fiend!' he laughed, 'I believe you will, though it is unheard-of to become an *espada* without training; but now for the means. All the *espadas* are engaged; it'll be difficult. Let me see . . . . The Queen has asked me to superintend the sports early in July, and then I shall give you your chance. Will that do? In the meantime, astonish us all with *capa* and *banderillas*, so that men may not think me mad when I put your name first on the bill.'

"I thanked him from my heart, as was his due, and after a little more talk I went away to tell Clemencia the news. She only said:

"'I'm glad. Now you'll get Juan to help you.'

"I stared at her.

"'Yes!' she went on, a little impatiently; 'he has been taught the work; he's sure to be able to show you a great deal.'

"I said not a word. She was sincere, I saw, but then she came from the North and knew nothing. I said to myself, 'That's how women are!'

"She continued, 'Of course you're clever with the *capa* and *banderillas*, and now you must do more than ever, as the Duke said, to deserve your chance.' And then she asked carelessly, 'Couldn't you bring the Duke and introduce him to us some time or other? I should like to thank him.'

"And I, thinking it meant our betrothal, was glad, and promised. And I remember I did bring him once to the box and he was kind in a way, but not cordial as he always was when alone with me, and he told Clemencia that I'd go very far, and that any woman would be lucky to get me for a husband, and so on. And after a little while he went away. But Clemencia was angry with him and said he put on airs; and, indeed, I had never seen him so cold and reserved; I could say little or nothing in his defence.

"Well, all that May I worked as I had never done. The Director told me he knew I was to use the *espada* on the first Sunday in July, and he seemed to be glad; and one or two of the best *espadas* came to me and said they'd heard the news and should be glad to welcome me among them. All this excited me, and I did better and better. I used to pick out the old prints of Goya, the great painter—you know his works are in the Prado —and do everything the old *matadores* did, and invent new things. But nothing 'took' like my trick with the *capa*. One Sunday, I remember, I had done it with six bulls, one after the other, and the people cheered and cheered. But the seventh was a bad bull, and, of course I didn't do it. And afterwards Clemencia asked me why I didn't, and I told her. For you see I didn't know then that women rate high what they don't understand. Mystery is everything to them. As if the explanation of such a thing makes it any easier! A man wins great battles by seizing the right moment and using it—the explana-

tion is simple. One must be great in order to know the moment, that's all. But women don't see that it is only small men who exaggerate the difficulties of their work. Great men find their work easy and say so, and, therefore, you'll find that women underrate great men and overpraise small ones. Clemencia really thought I ought to learn the *espada's* work from Juan. Ah! women are strange creatures. . . . Well, after that Sunday she was always bothering me to do the *capa* trick with every bull.

"'If you don't,' she used to say, 'you won't get the chance of being an *espada.*' And when she saw I laughed and paid no attention to her talk, she became more and more obstinate.

"'If the people get to know you can only do it with some bulls, they won't think much of you. Do it with every bull, then they can't say anything.'

"And I said 'No! and I shouldn't be able to say anything either.'

"'If you love me you will do as I say!'

"And when I didn't do as she wished,—it was madness —she grew cold to me, and sneered at me, and then urged me again, till I half yielded. Really, by that time I hardly knew what I couldn't do, for each day I seemed to get greater power over the bulls. At length a Sunday came, the first, I think in June, or the last in May. Clemencia sat with her mother and cousin in the best *palco;* I had got it from the Director, who now refused me nothing. I had done my *capa* trick with three bulls, one after the other, then the fourth came in. As soon

as I saw him, I knew he was bad, cunning I mean, and with black rage in the heart of him. The other men stood aside to let me do the trick, but I wouldn't. I ran away like the rest, and let him toss the *capa.* The people liked me, and so they cheered just the same, thinking I was tired; but suddenly Clemencia called out: 'The *capa* round the shoulders; the *capa* trick!' and I looked up at her; and she leaned over the front of the *palco,* and called out the words again.

"Then rage came into me, rage at her folly and cold heart; I took off my cap to her, and turned and challenged the bull with the *capa,* and, as he put down his head and rushed, I threw the *capa* round me and stood still. I did not even look at him. I knew it was no use. He struck me here on the thigh, and I went up into the air. The shock took away my senses. As I came to myself they were carrying me out of the ring, and the people were all standing up; but, as I looked towards the *palco,* I saw she wasn't standing up; she had a handkerchief before her face. At first I thought she was crying, and I felt well, and longed to say to her, 'It doesn't matter, I'm content;' then she put down the handkerchief and I saw she wasn't crying; there wasn't a tear in her eyes. She seemed surprised merely, and shocked. I suppose she thought I could work miracles, or rather she didn't care much whether I was hurt or not. That turned me faint again. I came to myself in my bed, where I spent the next month. The doctor told the Duke of Medini Celi —he had come to see me the same afternoon—that the

shock hadn't injured me, but I should be lame always, as the bull's horn had torn the muscles of my thigh from the bone. 'How he didn't bleed to death,' he said, 'is a wonder; now he'll pull through, but no more play with the bulls for him.' I knew better than the doctor, but I said nothing to him, only to the Duke I said:

"'Señor, a promise is a promise; I shall use the *espada* in your show in July.'

"And he said, 'Yes, my poor boy, if you wish it, and are able to; but how came you to make such a mistake?'

"'I made no mistake, Señor.'

"'You knew you'd be struck?'

"I nodded. He looked at me for a moment, and then held out his hand. He understood everything, I'm sure; but he said nothing to me then.

"Juan came to see me in the evening, and next day Clemencia and her mother. Clemencia was sorry, that I could see, and wanted me to forgive her. As if I had anything to forgive when she stood there so lithe and straight, with her flower-like face and the appealing eyes. Then came days of pain while the doctors forced the muscles back into their places. Soon I was able to get up, with a crutch, and limp about. As I grew better, Clemencia came seldomer, and when she came, her mother never left the room. I knew what that meant. She had told her mother not to go away; for, though the mother thought no one good enough for her daughter, yet she pitied me, and would have left us alone— sometimes. She had a woman's heart. But no, not once. Then I set my-

self to get well soon. I would show them all, I said to myself, that a lame Montes was worth more than other men. And I got better, so the doctor said, with surprising speed. . . . One day, towards the end of June, I said to the servant of the Duke—he sent a servant every day to me with fruit and flowers—that I wished greatly to see his master. And the Duke came to see me, the very same day.

"I thanked him first for all his kindness to me, and then asked:

" 'Señor, have you put my name on the bills as *espada?*'

" 'No,' he replied; 'you must get well first, and, indeed, if I were in your place, I should not try anything more till next season.'

"And I said, 'Señor Duque, it presses. Believe me, weak as I am, I can use the sword.'

"And he answered my very thought: 'Ah! She thinks you can't. And you want to prove the contrary. I shouldn't take the trouble, if I were you; but there! Don't deceive yourself or me; there is time yet for three or four days: I'll come again to see you, and if you wish to have your chance you shall. I give you my word.' As he left the room I had tears in my eyes; but I was glad, too, and confident: I'd teach the false friends a lesson. Save Antonio, the blacksmith, and some strangers, and the Duke's servant, no one had come near me for more than a week. Three days afterwards I wrote to the Duke asking him to fulfil his promise, and the very next day Juan, Clemencia, and her mother all came

to see me together. They all wanted to know what it meant. My name as *espada* for the next Sunday, they said, was first on the bills placarded all over Madrid, and the Duke had put underneath it—'By special request of H. M. the Queen.' I said nothing but that I was going to work; and I noticed that Clemencia wouldn't meet my eyes.

"What a day that was! That Sunday I mean. The Queen was in her box with the Duke beside her as our procession saluted them, and the great ring was crowded tier on tier, and she was in the best box I could get. But I tried not to think about her. My heart seemed to be frozen. Still I know now that I worked for her even then. When the first bull came in and the *capa* men played him, the people began to shout for me—'El Pequeño! El Pequeño! El Pequeño!'—and wouldn't let the games go on. So I limped forward in my *espada's* dress and took a *capa* from a man and challenged the bull, and he rushed at me—the honest one; I caught his look and knew it was all right, so I threw the *capa* round me and turned my back upon him. In one flash I saw the people rise in their places, and the Duke lean over the front of the *palco;* then, as the bull hesitated and stopped, and they began to cheer, I handed back the *capa,* and, after bowing, went again among the *espadas.* Then the people christened me afresh—'El Cojo!' (The Cripple!)—and I had to come forward and bow again and again, and the Queen threw me a gold cigarette case. I have it still. There it is. . . . I never looked

up at Clemencia, though I could see her always. She threw no rose to me that day. . . . Then the time came when I should kill the bull. I took the *muleta* in my left hand and went towards him with the sword uncovered in my right. I needed no trick. I held him with my will, and he looked up at me. 'Poor brute,' I thought, 'you are happier than I am.' And he bowed his head with the great, wondering, kindly eyes, and I struck straight through to the heart. On his knees he fell at my feet, and rolled over dead, almost without a quiver. As I hid my sword in the *muleta* and turned away, the people found their voices, 'Well done, The Cripple! Well done!' When I left the ring that day I left it as the first *espada* in Spain. So the Duke said, and he knew—none better. After one more Sunday the sports were over for the year, but that second Sunday I did better than the first, and I was engaged for the next season as first *espada*, with fifty thousand *duros* salary. Forty thousand I invested as the Duke advised—I have lived on the interest ever since—the other ten thousand I kept by me.

* * * * * * *

"I had resolved never to go near Clemencia again, and I kept my resolve for weeks. One day Juan came and told me Clemencia was suffering because of my absence. He said:

" 'She's proud, you know, proud as the devil, and she won't come and see you or send to you, but she loves you. There's no doubt of that: she loves you. I know them, and I never saw a girl so gone on a man.

Besides they're poor now, she and her mother; they've eaten up nearly all they had, and you're rich and could help them.'

"That made me think. I felt sure she didn't love me. That was plain enough. She hadn't even a good heart, or she would have come and cheered me up when I lay wounded—because of her obstinate folly. No! It wasn't worth while suffering any more on her account. That was clear. But if she needed me, if she were really poor? Oh, that I couldn't stand. I'd go to her. 'Are you sure?' I asked Juan, and when he said he was, I said:

" 'Then I'll visit them to-morrow.'

"And on the next day I went. Clemencia received me, as usual; she was too proud to notice my long absence, but the mother wanted to know why I had kept away from them so long. From that time on the mother seemed to like me greatly. I told her I was still sore—which was the truth—and I had had much to do.

" 'Some lady fallen in love with you, I suppose,' said Clemencia half scoffingly—so that I could hardly believe she had wanted to see me.

" 'No,' I answered, looking at her, 'one doesn't get love without seeking for it, sometimes not even then—when one's small and lame as I am.'

"Gradually the old relation established themselves again. But I had grown wiser, and watched her now with keen eyes as I had never done formerly. I found

she had changed—in some subtle way had become different. She seemed kinder to me, but at the same time her character appeared to be even stronger than it had been. I remember noticing one peculiarity in her I had not remarked before. Her admiration of the physique of men was now keen and outspoken. When we went to the theatre (as we often did) I saw that the better-looking and more finely formed actors had a great attraction for her. I had never noticed this in her before. In fact, she had seemed to me to know nothing about virile beauty, beyond a girl's vague liking for men who were tall and strong. But now she looked at men critically. She had changed; that was certain. What was the cause? . . . I could not divine. Poor fool that I was! I didn't know then that good women seldom or never care much for mere bodily qualities in a man; the women who do are generally worthless. Now, too, she spoke well of the men of Southern Spain; when I first met her she professed to admire the women of the South, but to think little of the men. Now she admired the men, too; they were warmer-hearted, she said; had more love and passion in them, and were gentler with women than those of the North. Somehow I hoped that she referred to me, that her heart was beginning to plead for me, and I was very glad and proud, though it all seemed too good to be true.

"One day in October, when I called with Juan, we found them packing their things. They had to leave,

they said, and take cheaper lodgings. Juan looked at me, and some way or other I got him to take Clemencia into another room. Then I spoke to the mother: Clemencia, I hoped, would soon be my wife; in any case I couldn't allow her to want for anything; I would bring a thousand *duros* the next day, and they must not think of leaving their comfortable apartments. The mother cried and said, I was good: 'God makes few such men,' and so forth. The next day I gave her the money, and it was arranged between us without saying anything to Clemencia. I remember about this time, in the early winter of that year, I began to see her faults more clearly, and I noticed that she had altered in many ways. Her temper had changed. It used to be equable though passionate. It had become uncertain and irritable. She had changed greatly. For now, she would let me kiss her without remonstrance, and sometimes almost as if she didn't notice the kiss, whereas before it used always to be a matter of importance. And when I asked her when she would marry me, she would answer half-carelessly, 'Some time, I suppose,' as she used to do, but her manner was quite different. She even sighed once as she spoke. Certainly she had changed. What was the cause? I couldn't make it out, therefore I watched, not suspiciously, but she had grown a little strange to me—a sort of puzzle, since she had been so unkind when I lay wounded. And partly from this feeling, partly from my great love for her, I noticed every-

thing. Still I urged her to marry me. I thought as soon as we were married, and she had a child to take care of and to love, it would be all right with both of us. Fool that I was!

"In April, which was fine, I remember, that year in Madrid—you know how cold it is away up there, and how keen the wind is; as the Madrileños say, ' 'twon't blow out a candle, but it'll kill a man'—Clemencia began to grow pale and nervous. I couldn't make her out; and so, more than ever, pity strengthening love in me, I urged her to tell me when she would marry me; and one day she turned to me, and I saw she was quite white as she said:

" 'After the season, perhaps.'

"Then I was happy, and ceased to press her. Early in May the games began—my golden time. I had grown quite strong again, and was surer of myself than ever. Beside, I wanted to do something to deserve my great happiness. Therefore, on one of the first days when the Queen and the Duke and Clemencia were looking on, I killed the bull with the sword immediately after he entered the ring, and before he had been tired at all. From that day on the people seemed crazy about me. I couldn't walk in the streets without being cheered; a crowd followed me wherever I went; great nobles asked me to their houses, and their ladies made much of me. But I didn't care, for all the time Clemencia was kind, and so I was happy.

"One day suddenly she asked me why I didn't make Juan an *espada*. I told her I had offered him the first place in my *cuadrilla;* but he wouldn't accept it. She declared that it was natural of him to refuse when I had passed him in the race; but why didn't I go to the Duke and get him made an *espada?* I replied laughingly that the Duke didn't make men *espadas,* but God or their parents. Then her brows drew down, and she said she hadn't thought to find such mean jealousy in me. So I answered her seriously that I didn't believe Juan would succeed as an *espada*, or else I should do what I could to get him appointed. At once she came and put her arms on my shoulders, and said 'twas like me, and she would tell Juan; and after that I could do nothing but kiss her. A little later I asked Juan about it, and he told me he thought he could do the work at least as well as Girvalda, and if I got him the place, he would never forget my kindness. So I went to the Director and told him what I wished. At first he refused, saying Juan had no talent, he would only get killed. When I pressed him he said all the *espadas* were engaged, and made other such excuses. So at last I said I'd work no more unless he gave Juan a chance. Then he yielded after grumbling a great deal.

"Two Sundays later Juan entered the ring for the first time as an *espada*. He looked the part to perfection. Never was there a more splendid figure of a man, and he was radiant in silver and blue. His mother was in the box that day with Clemencia and her mother. Just be-

fore we all parted as the sports were about to begin, Clemencia drew me on one side, and said, 'You'll see that he succeeds, won't you?' And I replied, 'Yes, of course, I will. Trust me; it'll be all right.' And it was, though I don't think it would have been, if she hadn't spoken. I remembered my promise to her, and when I saw that the bull which Juan ought to kill was vicious, I told another *espada* to kill him, and so got Juan an easy bull, which I took care to have tired out before I told him the moment had come. Juan wasn't a coward—no! but he hadn't the peculiar nerve needed for the business. The *matador's* spirit should rise to the danger, and Juan's didn't rise. He was white, but determined to do his best. That I could see. So I said to him, 'Go on, man! Don't lose time, or he'll get his wind again. You're all right; I shall be near you as one of your *cuadrilla.*' And so I was, and if I hadn't been, Juan would have come to grief. Yes, he'd have come to grief that very first day.

"Naturally enough we spent the evening together. It was a real *tertulia,* Señora Alvareda said; but Clemencia sat silent with the great, dark eyes turned in upon her thoughts, and the niece and myself were nearly as quiet, while Juan talked for every one, not forgetting himself. As he had been depressed before the trial so now he was unduly exultant, forgetting altogether, as it seemed to me, not only his nervousness but also that it had taken him two strokes to kill the bull. His first attempt was a failure, and the second one, though it brought the bull to his knees, never reached his heart. But Juan

was delighted and seemed never to weary of describing the bull and how he had struck him, his mother listening to him the while adoringly. It was past midnight when we parted from our friends; and Juan, as we returned to my rooms, would talk of nothing but the salary he expected to get. I was out of sorts; he had bragged so incessantly I had scarcely got a word with Clemencia, who could hardly find time to tell me she had a bad headache. Juan would come up with me; he wanted to know whether I'd go on the morrow to the Director to get him a permanent engagement. I got rid of him, at last, by saying I was tired to death, and it would look better to let the Director come and ask for his services. So at length we parted. After he left me I sat for some time wondering at Clemencia's paleness. She was growing thin too! And what thoughts had induced that rapt expression of face?

"Next morning I awoke late and had so much to do that I resolved to put off my visit to Clemencia till the afternoon, but in the meantime the Director spoke to me of Juan as rather a bungler, and when I defended him, agreed at last to engage him for the next four Sundays. This was a better result than I had expected, so as soon as I was free I made off to tell Juan the good news. I met his mother at the street door where she was talking with some women; she followed me into the *patio* saying Juan was not at home.

" 'Never mind,' I replied carelessly, 'I have good news for him, so I'll go upstairs to his room and wait.'

"'Oh!' she said, 'you can't do that; you mustn't; Juan wouldn't like it.'

"Then I laughed outright. Juan wouldn't like it—oh no! It was amusing to say that when we had lived together like brothers for years, and had had no secrets from one another. But she persisted and grew strangely hot and excited. Then I thought to myself—there you are again; these women understand nothing. So I went away, telling her to send Juan to me as soon as he came in. At this she seemed hugely relieved and became voluble in excuses. In fact her manner altered so entirely that before I had gone fifty yards down the street, it forced me to wonder. Suddenly my wonder changed to suspicion. Juan wasn't out! Who was with him I musn't see?

"As I stopped involuntarily, I saw a man on the other side of the street who bowed to me. I went across and said:

"'Friend, I am Montes, the matador. Do you own this house?'

"He answered that he did, and that every one in Madrid knew me.

"So I said, 'Lend me a room on your first-floor for an hour; *cosa de mujer* (A lady's in the case); you understand.'

At once he led me upstairs and showed me a room from the windows of which I could see the entrance to Juan's lodging. I thanked him, and when he left me I stood near the window and smoked and thought. What

could it all mean? . . . Had Clemencia anything to do with Juan? She made me get him his trial as *espada;* charged me to take care of him. He was from the South, too, and she had grown to like Southern men; 'they were passionate and gentle with women.' Curses on her! Her paleness occurred to me, her fits of abstraction. As I thought, every memory fitted into its place, and what had been mysterious grew plain to me; but I wouldn't accept the evidence of reason. No! I'd wait and see. Then I'd—at once I grew quiet. But again the thoughts came—like the flies that plague the cattle in summer time—and again I brushed them aside, and again they returned.

"Suddenly I saw Juan's mother come into the street wearing altogether too careless an expression. She looked about at haphazard as if she expected some one. After a moment or two of this she slipped back into the *patio* with mystery in her sudden decision and haste. Then out came a form I knew well, and, with stately, even step, looking neither to the right hand nor the left, walked down the street. It was Clemencia, as my heart had told me it would be. I should have known her anywhere even had she not—just below the window where I was watching—put back her *mantilla* with a certain proud grace of movement which I had admired a hundred times. As she moved her head to feel that the *mantilla* draped her properly I saw her face; it was drawn and set like one fighting against pain. That made me smile with pleasure.

"Five minutes later Juan swung out of the doorway in the full costume of an *espada*—he seemed to sleep in

it now—with a cigarette between his teeth. Then I grew sad and pitiful. We had been such friends. I had meant only good to him always. And he was such a fool! I understood it all now; knew, as if I had been told, that the intimacy between them dated from the time when I lay suffering in bed. Thinking me useless and never having had any real affection for me, Clemencia had then followed her inclination and tried to win Juan. She had succeeded easily enough, no doubt, but not in getting him to marry her. Later, she induced me to make Juan an *espada,* hoping against hope that he'd marry her when his new position had made him rich. On the other hand he had set himself to cheat me because of the money I had given her mother, which relieved him from the necessity of helping them; and secondly, because it was only through my influence that he could hope to become an *espada.* Ignoble beasts! And then jealousy seized me as I thought of her admiration of handsome men, and at once I saw her in his arms. Forthwith pity, and sadness and anger left me, and, as I thought of him swaggering past the window, I laughed aloud. Poor weak fools! I, too, could cheat.

"He had passed out of the street. I went downstairs and thanked the landlord for his kindness to me. 'For your good-nature,' I said, 'you must come and see me work from a box next Sunday. Ask for me, I won't forget.' And he thanked me with many words and said he had never missed a Sunday since he had first seen me play with the *capa* three years before. I laughed and nodded

to him and went my way homewards, whither I knew Juan had gone before me.

"As I entered my room, he rose to meet me with a shadow as of doubt or fear upon him. But I laughed cheerfully, gaily enough to deceive even so finished an actor as he was, and told him the good news. 'Engaged,' I cried, slapping him on the shoulder. 'The Director engages you for four Sundays certain.' And that word 'certain' made me laugh louder still—jubilantly. Then afraid of overdoing my part, I sat quietly for some time and listened to his expressions of fatuous self-satisfaction. As he left me to go and trumpet the news from *café* to *café*, I had to choke down my contempt for him by recalling that picture, by forcing myself to see them in each other's arms. Then I grew quiet again and went to call upon my betrothed.

"She was at home and received me as usual, but with more kindness than was her wont. 'She feels a little remorse at deceiving me,' I said to myself, reading her now as if her soul were an open book. I told her of Juan's engagement and she let slip 'I wish I had known that sooner!' But I did not appear to notice anything. It amused me now to see how shallow she was and how blind I had been. And then I played with her as she had often, doubtless, played with me. 'He will go far, will Juan,' I said, 'now that he has begun—very far, in a short time.' And within me I laughed at the double meaning as she turned startled eyes upon me. And then, 'His old loves will mourn for the distance which must

soon separate him from them. Oh, yes, Juan will go far and leave them behind.' I saw a shade come upon her face, and, therefore, added: 'But no one will grudge him his success. He's so good-looking and good-tempered, and kind and true.' And then she burst into tears, and I went to her and asked as if suspiciously, 'Why, what's the matter, Clemencia?' Amid her sobs, she told me she didn't know, but she felt upset, out of sorts, nervous; she had a headache. 'Heartache,' I laughed to myself, and bade her go and lie down; rest would do her good; I'd come again on the morrow. As I turned to leave the room she called me back and put her arms round my neck and asked me to be patient with her; she was foolish, but she'd make it up to me yet. . . . And I comforted her, the poor, shallow fool, and went away.

In some such fashion as this the days passed; each hour—now my eyes were opened—bringing me some fresh entertainment; for, in spite of their acting, I saw that none of them were happy. I knew everything. I guessed that Juan, loving his liberty, was advising Clemencia to make up to me, and I saw how badly she played her part. And all this had escaped me a few days before; I laughed at myself more contemptuously than at them. It interested me, too, to see that Liberata had grown suspicious. She no longer trusted Juan's protestations implicitly. Every now and then, with feminine bitterness, she thrust the knife of her own doubt, and fear into Clemencia's wound. 'Don't you think, Montes, Clemencia is getting pale and thin?' she'd ask; 'it is for love of you,

you know. She should marry soon.' And all the while she cursed me in her heart for a fool, while I laughed to myself. The comedy was infinitely amusing to me, for now I held the cords in my hand, and knew I could drop the curtain and cut short the acting just when I liked. Clemencia's mother, too, would sometimes set to work to amuse me as she went about with eyes troubled, as if anxious for the future, and yet stomach-satisfied with the comforts of the present. She, too, thought it worth while, now and then, to befool me, when fear came upon her—between meals. That did not please me! When she tried to play with me, the inconceivable stupidity of my former blind trust became a torture to me. Juan's mother I saw but little of; yet I liked her. She was honest at least, and deceit was difficult to her. Juan was her idol; all he did was right in her eyes; it was not her fault that she couldn't see he was like a poisoned well. All these days Juan was friendly to me as usual, with scarcely a shade of the old condescension in his manner. He no longer showed envy by remarking upon my luck. Since he himself had been tested, he seemed to give me as much respect as his self-love could spare. Nor did he now boast, as he used to do, of his height and strength. Once, however, on the Friday evening, I think it was, he congratulated Clemencia on my love for her, and joked about our marriage. The time had come to drop the curtain and make an end.

"On the Saturday I went to the ring and ordered my *palco* to be filled with flowers. From there I went to

the Duke of Medina Celi. He received me as always, with kindness, thought I looked ill, and asked me whether I felt the old wound still. 'No,' I replied, 'no, Señor Duque, and if I come to you now it is only to thank you once more for all your goodness to me.'

"And he said after a pause—I remember each word; for he meant well:

" 'Montes, there's something very wrong.' And then, 'Montes, one should never adore a woman; they all want a master. My hairs have grown gray in learning that. . . . . A woman, you see, may look well and yet be cold-hearted and—not good. But a man would be a fool to refuse nuts because one that looked all right was hollow.'

" 'You are wise,' I said, 'Señor Duque! and I have been foolish. I hope it may be well with you always; but wisdom and folly come to the same end at last.'

"After I left him I went to Antonio and thanked him, and gave him a letter to be opened in a week. There were three enclosures in it—one for himself, one for the mother of Juan, and one for the mother of Clemencia, and each held three thousand *duros*. As they had cheated me for money, money they should have—with my contempt. Then I went back to the ring, and as I looked up to my *palco* and saw that the front of it was one bed of white and scarlet blossoms, I smiled. 'White for purity,' I said, 'and scarlet for blood—a fit show!' And I went home and slept like a child.

"Next day in the ring I killed two bulls, one on his first rush, and the other after the usual play. Then an-

other *espada* worked, and then came the turn of Juan. As the bull stood panting I looked up at the *palco*. There they all were, Clemencia with hands clasped on the flowers and fixed, dilated eyes, her mother half asleep behind her. Next to Clemencia, the niece with flushed cheeks, and leaning on her shoulder his mother. Juan was much more nervous than he had been on the previous Sunday. As his bull came into the ring he asked me hurriedly: 'Do you think it's an easy one?' I told him carelessly that all bulls were easy and he seemed to grow more and more nervous. When the bull was ready for him he turned to me, passing his tongue feverishly over his dry lips.

"'You'll stand by me, won't you, Montes?'

"And I asked with a smile:

"'Shall I stand by you as you've stood by me?'

"'Yes, of course, we've always been friends.'

"'I shall be as true to you as you have been to me!' I said. And I moved to his right hand and looked at the bull. It was a good one; I couldn't have picked a better. In his eyes I saw courage that would never yield and hate that would strike in the death-throe, and I exulted and held his eyes with mine, and promised him revenge. While he bowed his horns to the *muleta*, he still looked at me and I at him; and as I felt that Juan had levelled his sword, and was on the point of striking, I raised my head with a sweep to the side, as if I had been the bull; and as I swung, so the brave bull swung too. And then—then all the ring swam round with me, and yet

I had heard the shouting and had seen the spectators spring to their feet. . . .

"I was in the street close to the Alvaredas'. The mother met me at the door; she was crying and the tears were running down her fat, greasy cheeks. She told me Clemencia had fainted and had been carried home, and Juan was dead—ripped open—and his mother distracted, and 'twas a pity, for he was so handsome and kind and good-natured, and her best dress was ruined, and *los toros* shouldn't be allowed, and—as I brushed past her in disgust—that Clemencia was in her room crying.

"I went upstairs and entered the room. There she sat with her elbows on the table and her hair all round her face and down her back, and her fixed eyes stared at me. As I closed the door and folded my arms and looked at her, she rose, and her stare grew wild with surprise and horror, and then, almost without moving her lips, she said:

"'Holy Virgin! You did it! I see it in your face!'

"And my heart jumped against my arms for joy, and I said in the same slow whisper, imitating her:

"'Yes; I did it.'

"As I spoke she sprang forward with hate in her face, and poured out a stream of loathing and contempt on me. She vomited abuse as from her very soul: I was low and base and cowardly; I was—God knows what all. And he was handsome and kind, with a face like a king. . . . And I had thought she could love me, me, the ugly, little, lame cur, while he was there. And she laughed. She'd never have let my lips touch her if it

hadn't been that her mother liked me and to please him. And now I had killed him, the best friend I had. Oh, 'twas horrible! Then she struck her head with her fists and asked how God, God, God could allow me to kill a man whose finger was worth a thousand lives such as mine!

"Then I laughed and said:

"'You mistake. You killed him. You made him an *espada*—you!'

"As I spoke her eyes grew fixed and her mouth opened, and she seemed to struggle to speak, but she only groaned —and fell face forwards on the floor.

"I turned and left the room as her mother entered it." After a long pause Montes went on:

"I heard afterwards that she died next morning in premature child-birth. I left Madrid that night and came here, where I have lived ever since, if this can be called living. . . . Yet at times, now fairly content, save for one thing—'Remorse?' Yes!"—and the old man rose to his feet, while his great eyes blazing with passion held me. "Remorse! That I let the bull kill him. I should have torn his throat out with my own hands."

Genesis Chapters 1-3

IN the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth

put forth grass, herbs yielding seed, and fruit-trees bearing fruit after their kind, wherein is the seed thereof, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, herbs yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, wherein is the seed thereof, after their kind: and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

And God said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created the great sea-monsters, and every living creature that moveth, wherewith the waters swarmed, after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the

seas, and let birds multiply on the earth. And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind: and it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the ground after its kind: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food; and to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food: and it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.

And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

And the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work, which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made.

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that Jehovah God made earth and heaven. And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up; for Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon the earth: and there was not a man to till the ground; but there went up a mist from the earth, and and watered the whole face of the ground. And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And Jehovah God planted a garden eastward, in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made Jehovah God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became four heads. The name of the first is Pishon: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havi-

lah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth in front of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

And Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him. And out of the ground Jehovah God formed every beast of the field, and every bird of the heavens; and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them: and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the heavens, and to every beast of the field; but for man there was not found a help meet for him. And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh:

she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God amongst the trees of the garden.

And Jehovah God called unto the man, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, Whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And Jehovah God said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the

ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And the man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. And Jehovah God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins and clothed them.

And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever—therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

The Gold-Bug

By Edgar Allan Poe

What ho! what ho! this fellow is dancing mad!
He hath been bitten by the Tarantula.

—*All in the Wrong.*

MANY years ago, I contracted an intimacy with a Mr. William Legrand. He was of an ancient Huguenot family, and had once been wealthy; but a series of misfortunes had reduced him to want. To avoid the mortification consequent upon his disasters, he left New Orleans, the city of his forefathers, and took up his residence at Sullivan's Island, near Charleston, South Carolina.

This island is a very singular one. It consists of little else than the sea sand, and is about three miles long. Its breadth at no point exceeds a quarter of a mile. It is separated from the mainland by a scarcely perceptible creek, oozing its way through a wilderness of reeds and slime, a favorite resort of the marsh-hen. The vegetation, as might be supposed, is scant, or at least dwarfish. No trees of any magnitude are to be seen. Near the western extremity, where Fort Moultrie stands, and where are some miserable frame buildings, tenanted, during the summer, by the fugitives from Charleston dust and fever, may be found, indeed, the bristly palmetto; but the whole island, with the exception of this western point, and a line of hard,

white beach on the sea-coast, is covered with a dense undergrowth of the sweet myrtle so much prized by the horticulturists of England. The shrub here often attains the height of fifteen or twenty feet, and forms an almost impenetrable coppice, burdening the air with its fragrance.

In the inmost recesses of this coppice, not far from the eastern or more remote end of the island, Legrand had built himself a small hut, which he occupied when I first, by mere accident, made his acquaintance. This soon ripened into friendship—for there was much in the recluse to excite interest and esteem. I found him well educated, with unusual powers of mind, but infected with misanthropy, and subject to perverse moods of alternate enthusiasm and melancholy. He had with him many books, but rarely employed them. His chief amusements were gunning and fishing, or sauntering along the beach and through the myrtles, in quest of shells or entomological specimens—his collection of the latter might have been envied by a Swammerdamm. In these excursions he was usually accompanied by an old negro, called Jupiter, who had been manumitted before the reverses of the family, but who could be induced, neither by threats nor by promises, to abandon what he considered his right of attendance upon the footsteps of his young "Massa Will." It is not improbable that the relatives of Legrand, conceiving him to be somewhat unsettled in intellect, had contrived to instil this obstinacy into

Jupiter, with a view of the supervision and guardianship of the wanderer.

The winters in the latitude of Sullivan's Island are seldom very severe, and in the fall of the year it is a rare event indeed when a fire is considered necessary. About the middle of October, 18—, there occurred, however, a day of remarkable chilliness. Just before sunset I scrambled my way through the evergreens to the hut of my friend, whom I had not visited for several weeks—my residence being, at that time, in Charleston, a distance of nine miles from the island, while the facilities of passage and re-passage were very far behind those of the present day. Upon reaching the hut I rapped, as was my custom, and getting no reply, sought for the key where I knew it was secreted, unlocked the door, and went in. A fine fire was blazing upon the hearth. It was a novelty, and by no means an ungrateful one. I threw off an overcoat, took an arm-chair by the crackling logs, and awaited patiently the arrival of my hosts.

Soon after dark they arrived, and gave me a most cordial welcome. Jupiter, grinning from ear to ear, bustled about to prepare some marsh-hens for supper. Legrand was in one of his fits—how else shall I term them?—of enthusiasm. He had found an unknown bivalve, forming a new genus, and, more than this, he had hunted down and secured, with Jupiter's' assistance, a *scarabæus* which he believed to be totally new,

but in respect to which he wished to have my opinion on the morrow.

"And why not to-night?" I asked, rubbing my hands over the blaze, and wishing the whole tribe of *scarabæi* at the devil.

"Ah, if I had only known you were here!" said Legrand, "but it's so long since I saw you; and how could I foresee that you would pay me a visit this very night of all others? As I was coming home I met Lieutenant G——, from the fort, and, very foolishly, I lent him the bug; so it will be impossible for you to see it until the morning. Stay here to-night, and I will send Jup down for it at sunrise. It is the loveliest thing in creation!"

"What?—sunrise?"

"Nonsense! no!—the bug. It is of a brilliant gold color—about the size of a large hickory-nut—with two jet black spots near one extremity of the back, and another, somewhat longer, at the other. The *antennæ* are—"

"Dey ain't *no* tin in him, Massa Will, I keep a-tellin' on you," here interrupted Jupiter; "de bug is a goole-bug, solid, ebery bit of him, inside and all, sep him wing—neber feel half so hebby a bug in my life."

"Well, suppose it is, Jup," replied Legrand, somewhat more earnestly, it seemed to me, than the case demanded; "is that any reason for your letting the birds burn? The color"—here he turned to me—"is really almost enough to warrant Jupiter's idea. You

never saw a more brilliant metallic lustre than the scales emit—but of this you cannot judge till to-morrow. In the meantime I can give you some idea of the shape." Saying this, he seated himself at a small table, on which were a pen and ink, but no paper. He looked for some in a drawer, but found none.

"Never mind," he said at length, "this will answer;" and he drew from his waistcoat pocket a scrap of what I took to be very dirty foolscap, and made upon it a rough drawing with the pen. While he did this, I retained my seat by the fire, for I was still chilly. When the design was complete, he handed it to me without rising. As I received it, a loud growl was heard, succeeded by a scratching at the door. Jupiter opened it, and a large Newfoundland, belonging to Legrand rushed in, leaped upon my shoulders, and loaded me with caresses; for I had shown him much attention during previous visits. When his gambols were over, I looked at the paper, and, to speak the truth, found myself not a little puzzled at what my friend had depicted.

"Well!" I said, after contemplating it for some minutes, "this *is* a strange *scarabæus,* I must confess; new to me; never saw anything like it before—unless it was a skull, or a death's-head, which it more nearly resembles than anything else that has come under *my* observation."

"A death's-head!" echoed Legrand. "Oh—yes—well, it has something of that appearance upon paper,

no doubt. The two upper black spots look like eyes, eh? and the longer one at the bottom like a mouth—and then the shape of the whole is oval."

"Perhaps so," said I; "but, Legrand, I fear you are no artist. I must wait until I see the beetle itself, if I am to form any idea of its personal appearance."

"Well, I don't know," said he, a little nettled, "I draw tolerably—*should* do it at least—have had good masters, and flatter myself that I am not quite a blockhead."

"But, my dear fellow, you are joking then," said I, "this is a very passable *skull*— indeed, I may say that it is a very *excellent* skull, according to the vulgar notions about such specimens of physiology—and your *scarabæus* must be the queerest *scarabæus* in the world if it resembles it. Why, we may get up a very thrilling bit of superstition upon this hint. I presume you will call the bug *scarabæus caput hominis*, or something of that kind—there are many similar titles in the Natural Histories. But where are the *antennæ* you spoke of?"

"The *antennæ!*" said Legrand, who seemed to be getting unaccountably warm upon the subject; "I am sure you must see the *antennæ*. I made them as distinct as they are in the original insect, and I presume that is sufficient."

"Well, well," I said, "perhaps you have—still I don't see them"; and I handed him the paper without additional remark, not wishing to ruffle his temper; but I was much surprised at the turn affairs had taken; his

ill humor puzzled me—and, as for the drawing of the beetle, there were positively no *antennæ* visible, and the whole *did* bear a very close resemblance to the ordinary cuts of a death's-head.

He received the paper very peevishly, and was about to crumpl it, apparently to throw it in the fire, when a casual glance at the design seemed suddenly to rivet his attention. In an instant his face grew violently red—in another excessively pale. For some minutes he continued to scrutinize the drawing minutely where he sat. At length he arose, took a candle from the table, and proceeded to seat himself upon a sea-chest in the farthest corner of the room. Here again he made an anxious examination of the paper; turning it in all directions. He said nothing, however, and his conduct greatly astonished me; yet I thought it prudent not to exacerbate the growing moodiness of his temper by any comment. Presently he took from his coat-pocket a wallet, placed the paper carefully in it, and deposited both in a writing-desk, which he locked. He now grew more composed in his demeanor; but his original air of enthusiasm had quite disappeared. Yet he seemed not so much sulky as abstracted. As the evening wore away he became more and more absorbed in revery, from which no sallies of mine could arouse him. It had been my intention to pass the night at the hut, as I had frequently done before, but, seeing my host in this mood, I deemed it proper to take leave. He did not press me

to remain, but, as I departed, he shook my hand with even more than his usual cordiality.

It was about a month after this (and during the interval I had seen nothing of Legrand) when I received a visit, at Charleston, from his man, Jupiter. I had never seen the good old negro look so dispirited, and I feared that some serious disaster had befallen my friend.

"Well, Jup," said I, "what is the matter now?—how is your master?"

"Why, to speak de troof, massa, him not so berry well as mought be."

"Not well! I am truly sorry to hear it. What does he complain of?"

"Dar! dat's it—him neber 'plain of notin'—but him berry sick for all dat."

"Very sick, Jupiter!—why didn't you say so at once! Is he confined to bed?"

"No, dat he ain't—he ain't, fin'd nowhar—dat's just whar de shoe pinch—my mind is got to be berry hebby 'bout poor Massa Will."

"Jupiter, I should like to understand what it is you are talking about. You say your master is sick. Hasn't he told you what ails him?"

"Why, massa, 'tain't worf while for to git mad about de matter—Massa Will say noffin at all ain't de matter wid him—but den what make him go about looking dis here way, wid he head down and he soldiers up,

and as white as a goose? And den he keep a syphon all de time—"

"Keeps a what, Jupiter?"

"Keeps a syphon wid de figgurs on de slate—de queerest figgurs I ebber did see. Ise gittin' to be skeered, I tell you. Hab for to keep mighty tight eye 'pon him 'noovers. Todder day he gib me slip 'fore de sun up and was gone de whole ob de blessed day. I had a big stick ready cut for to gib him deuced good beating when he did come—but Ise sich a fool dat I hadn't de heart after all—he looked so berry poorly."

"Eh?—what?—ah yes!—upon the whole I think you had better not be too severe with the poor fellow—don't flog him, Jupiter—he can't very well stand it—but can you form no idea of what has occasioned this illness, or rather this change of conduct? Has anything unpleasant happened since I saw you?"

"No, massa, dey ain't bin noffin onpleasant *since* den—'twas *'fore* den I'm feared—'twas de berry day you was dare."

"How? what do you mean?"

"Why, massa, I mean de bug—dare now."

"The what?"

"De bug—I'm berry sartin dat Massa Will bin bit somewhere 'bout de head by dat goole-bug."

"And what cause have you, Jupiter, for such a supposition?"

"Claws enuff, massa, and mouff, too. I nebber did see sich a deuced bug—he kick and he bite ebery ting

what cum near him. Massa Will cotch him fuss, but had for to let him go 'gin mighty quick, I tell you—den was de time he must ha' got de bite. I didn't like de look ob de bug mouff, myself, nohow, so I wouldn't take hold ob him wid my finger, but I cotch him wid a piece ob paper dat I found. I wrap him up in de paper and stuff a piece of it in he mouff—dat was de way."

"And you think, then, that your master was really bitten by the beetle, and that the bite made him sick?"

"I don't think noffin about it—I knows it. What make him dream 'bout de goole so much, if 'taint cause he bit by the goole-bug? Ise heered 'bout dem goole-bugs 'fore dis."

"But how do you know he dreams about gold?"

"How I know? why, 'cause he talk about it in he sleep—dat's how I knows."

"Well, Jup, perhaps you are right; but to what fortunate circumstance am I to attribute the honor of a visit from you today?"

"What de matter, massa?"

"Did you bring any message from Mr. Legrand?"

"No, massa, I bring dis here 'pissel"; and here Jupiter handed me a note which ran thus:

"MY DEAR——

"Why have I not seen you for so long a time? I hope you have not been so foolish as to take offence at any little *brusquerie* of mine; but no, that is improbable.

"Since I saw you I have had great cause for anxiety. I have something to tell you, yet scarcely know how to tell it, or whether I should tell it at all.

"I have not been quite well for some days past, and poor old Jup annoys me, almost beyond endurance, by his well-meant attentions. Would you believe it?—he had prepared a huge stick, the other day, with which to chastise me for giving him the slip, and spending the day, *solus*, among the hills on the main land. I verily believe that my ill looks alone saved me a flogging.

"I have made no addition to my cabinet since we met.

"If you can, in any way, make it convenient, come over with Jupiter. *Do* come. I wish to see you *to-night*, upon business of importance. I assure you that it is of the ***highest*** importance.

"Ever yours,
"WILLIAM LEGRAND."

There was something in the tone of this note which gave me great uneasiness. Its whole style differed materially from that of Legrand. What could he be dreaming of? What new crotchet possessed his excitable brain? What "business of the highest importance" could *he* possibly have to transact? Jupiter's account of him boded no good. I dreaded lest the continued pressure of misfortune had, at length, fairly unsettled the reason of my friend. Without a mo-

ment's hesitation, therefore, I prepared to accompany the negro.

Upon reaching the wharf, I noticed a scythe and three spades, all apparently new, lying in the bottom of the boat in which we were to embark.

"What is the meaning of all this, Jup?" I inquired.

"Him syfe, massa, and spade."

"Very true; but what are they doing here?"

"Him de syfe and de spade what Massa Will sis 'pon my buying for him in de town, and de debbil's own lot of money I had to gib for 'em."

"But what, in the name of all that is mysterious, is your 'Massa Will' going to do with scythes and spades?"

"Dat's more dan *I* know, and debbil take me if I don't b'lieve 'tis more dan he know too. But it's all cum ob de bug."

Finding that no satisfaction was to be obtained of Jupiter, whose whole intellect seemed to be absorbed by "de bug," I now stepped into the boat, and made sail. With a fair and strong breeze we soon ran into the little cove to the northward of Fort Moultrie, and a walk of some two miles brought us to the hut. It was about three in the afternoon when we arrived. Legrand had been awaiting us in eager expectation. He grasped my hand with a nervous *empressement* which alarmed me and strengthened the suspicions already entertained. His countenance was pale even to ghastliness, and his deep-set eyes glared with un-

natural lustre. After some inquiries respecting his health, I asked him, not knowing what better to say, if he had yet obtained the *scarabæus* from Lieutenant G——.

"Oh, yes," he replied, coloring violently, "I got it from him the next morning. Nothing should tempt me to part with that *scarabæus*. Do you know that Jupiter is quite right about it?"

"In what way?" I asked, with a sad foreboding at heart.

"In supposing it to be a bug of *real gold*." He said this with an air of profound seriousness, and I felt inexpressibly shocked.

"This bug is to make my fortune," he continued, with a triumphant smile; "to reinstate me in my family possessions. Is it any wonder, then, that I prize it? Since Fortune has thought fit to bestow it upon me, I have only to use it properly, and I shall arrive at the gold of which it is the index. Jupiter, bring me that *scarabæus!*"

"What! de bug, massa? I'd rudder not go fer trubble dat bug; you mus' git him for your own self." Hereupon Legrand arose, with a grave and stately air, and brought me the beetle from a glass case in which it was enclosed. It was a beautiful *scarabæus*, and, at that time, unknown to naturalists—of course a great prize in a scientific point of view. There were two round black spots near one extremity of the back, and a long one near the other. The scales were exceed-

ingly hard and glossy, with all the appearance of burnished gold. The weight of the insect was very remarkable, and, taking all things into consideration, I could hardly blame Jupiter for his opinion respecting it; but what to make of Legrand's concordance with that opinion, I could not, for the life of me, tell.

"I sent for you," said he, in a grandiloquent tone, "when I had completed my examination of the beetle. I sent for you that I might have your counsel and assistance in furthering the views of Fate and of the bug—"

"My dear Legrand," I cried, interrupting him, "you are certainly unwell, and had better use some little precautions. You shall go to bed, and I will remain with you a few days, until you get over this. You are feverish and—"

"Feel my pulse," said he.

I felt it, and, to say the truth, found not the slightest indication of fever.

"But you may be ill and yet have no fever. Allow me this once to prescribe for you. In the first place go to bed. In the next—"

"You are mistaken," he interposed, "I am as well as I can expect to be under the excitement which I suffer. If you really wish me well, you will relieve this excitement."

"And how is this to be done?"

"Very easily. Jupiter and myself are going upon an expedition into the hills, upon the main land, and,

in this expedition, we shall need the aid of some person in whom we can confide. You are the only one we can trust. Whether we succeed or fail, the excitement which you now perceive in me will be equally allayed."

"I am anxious to oblige you in any way," I replied; "but do you mean to say that this infernal beetle has any connection with your expedition into the hills?"

"It has."

"Then, Legrand, I can become a party to no such absurd proceeding."

"I am sorry—very sorry—for we shall have to try it by ourselves."

"Try it by yourselves! The man is surely mad!—but stay!—how long do you propose to be absent?"

"Probably all night. We shall start immediately, and be back, at all events, by sunrise."

"And will you promise me, upon your honor, that when this freak of yours is over, and the bug business (good God!) settled to your satisfaction, you will then return home and follow my advice implicitly, as that of your physician?"

"Yes; I promise; and now let us be off, for we have no time to lose."

With a heavy heart I accompanied my friend. We started about four o'clock—Legrand, Jupiter, the dog, and myself. Jupiter had with him the scythe and spades—the whole of which he insisted upon carrying—more through fear, it seemed to me, of trusting

either of the implements within reach of his master, than from any excess of industry or complaisance. His demeanor was dogged in the extreme, and "dat deuced bug" were the sole words which escaped his lips during the journey. For my own part, I had charge of a couple of dark lanterns, while Legrand contented himself with the *scarabæus,* which he carried attached to the end of a bit of whip-cord, twirling it to and fro, with the air of a conjuror, as he went. When I observed this last, plain evidence of my friend's aberration of mind, I could scarcely refrain from tears. I thought it best, however, to humor his fancy, at least for the present, or until I could adopt some more energetic measures with a chance of success. In the meantime I endeavored, but all in vain, to sound him in regard to the object of the expedition. Having succeeded in inducing me to accompany him, he seemed unwilling to hold conversation upon any topic of minor importance, and to all my questions vouchsafed no other reply than "we shall see!"

We crossed the creek at the head of the island by means of a skiff, and, ascending the high grounds on the shore of the main land, proceeded in a northwesterly direction, through a tract of country excessively wild and desolate, where no trace of a human footstep was to be seen. Legrand led the way with decision; pausing only for an instant, here and there, to consult what appeared to be certain landmarks of his own contrivance upon a former occasion.

In this manner we journeyed for about two hours, and the sun was just setting when we entered a region infinitely more dreary than any yet seen. It was a species of tableland, near the summit of an almost inaccessible hill, densely wooded from base to pinnacle, and interspersed with huge crags that appeared to lie loosely upon the soil, and in many cases were prevented from precipitating themselves into the valleys below, merely by the support of the trees against which they reclined. Deep ravines, in various directions, gave an air of still sterner solemnity to the scene.

The natural platform to which we had clambered was thickly overgrown with brambles, through which we soon discovered that it would have been impossible to force our way but for the scythe; and Jupiter, by direction of his master, proceeded to clear for us a path to the foot of an enormously tall tulip-tree, which stood, with some eight or ten oaks, upon the level, and far surpassed them all, and all other trees which I had then ever seen, in the beauty of its foliage and form, in the wide spread of its branches, and in the general majesty of its appearance. When we reached this tree, Legrand turned to Jupiter, and asked him if he thought he could climb it. The old man seemed a little staggered by the question, and for some moments made no reply. At length he approached the huge trunk, walked slowly around it, and examined it with

minute attention. When he had completed his scrutiny, he merely said:

"Yes, massa, Jup climb any tree he ebber see in he life."

"Then up with you as soon as possible, for it will soon be too dark to see what we are about."

"How far mus' go up, massa?" inquired Jupiter.

"Get up the main trunk first, and then I will tell you which way to go—and here—stop! take this beetle with you."

"De bug, Massa Will!—de goole-bug!" cried the negro, drawing back in dismay—"what for mus tote de bug way up de tree? —d—n if I do!"

"If you are afraid, Jup, a great big negro like you, to take hold of a harmless little dead beetle, why you can carry it up by this string—but, if you do not take it up with you in some way, I shall be under the necessity of breaking your head with this shovel."

"What de matter now, massa?" said Jup, evidently shamed into compliance; "always want for to raise fuss wid old nigger. Was only funnin' anyhow. *Me* feered de bug! What I keer for de bug?" Here he took cautiously hold of the extreme end of the string, and, maintaining the insect as far from his person as circumstances would permit, prepared to ascend the tree.

In youth, the tulip-tree, or *Liriodendron Tulipiferum,* the most magnificent of American foresters, has a trunk peculiarly smooth, and often rises to a great height without

lateral branches; but, in its riper age, the bark becomes gnarled and uneven, while many short limbs make their appearance on the stem. Thus the difficulty of ascension, in the present case, lay more in semblance than in reality. Embracing the huge cylinder, as closely as possible, with his arms and knees, seizing with his hands some projections, and resting his naked toes upon others, Jupiter, after one or two narrow escapes from falling, at length wriggled himself into the first great fork, and seemed to consider the whole business as virtually accomplished. The *risk* of the achievement was, in fact, now over, although the climber was some sixty or seventy feet from the ground.

"Which way mus' go now, Massa Will?" he asked.

"Keep up the largest branch—the one on this side," said Legrand. The negro obeyed him promptly, and apparently with but little trouble; ascending higher and higher, until no glimpse of his squat figure could be obtained through the dense foliage which enveloped it. Presently his voice was heard in a sort of halloo.

"How much fudder is got for go?"

"How high up are you?" asked Legrand.

"Ebber so fur," replied the negro; "can see de sky fru de top ob de tree."

"Never mind the sky, but attend to what I say. Look down the trunk and count the limbs below you on this side. How many limbs have you passed?"

"One, two, tree, four, fibe—I done pass fibe big limb, massa, 'pon dis side."

"Then go one limb higher."

In a few minutes the voice was heard again, announcing that the seventh limb was attained.

"Now, Jup," cried Legrand, evidently much excited, "I want you to work your way out upon that limb as far as you can. If you see anything strange let me know."

By this time what little doubt I might have entertained of my poor friend's insanity was put finally at rest. I had no alternative but to conclude him stricken with lunacy, and I became seriously anxious about getting him home. While I was pondering upon what was best to be done, Jupiter's voice was again heard.

"Mos feered for to ventur pon dis limb berry far—'tis dead limb putty much all de way."

"Did you say it was a *dead* limb, Jupiter?" cried Legrand in a quavering voice.

"Yes, massa, him dead as de door-nail—done up for sartin—done departed dis here life."

"What in the name of heaven shall I do?" asked Legrand, seemingly in the greatest distress.

"Do!" said I, glad of an opportunity to interpose a word, "why, come home and go to bed. Come now! —that's a fine fellow. It's getting late, and, besides, you remember your promise."

"Jupiter," cried he, without heeding me in the least, "do you hear me?"

"Yes, Massa Will, hear you ebber so plain."

"Try the wood well, then, with your knife, and see if you think it *very* rotten."

"Him rotten, massa, sure nuff," replied the negro in a few moments, "but not so berry rotten as mought be. Mought venture out leetle way pon de limb by myself, dat's true."

"By yourself!—what do you mean?"

"Why, I mean de bug. 'Tis *berry* hebby bug. S'pose I drop him down fuss, and den de limb won't break wid just de weight of one nigger."

"You infernal scoundrel!" cried Legrand, apparently much relieved, "what do you mean by telling me such nonsense as that? As sure as you drop that beetle I'll break your neck. Look here, Jupiter, do you hear me?"

"Yes, massa, needn't hollo at poor nigger dat style."

"Well, now listen!—if you will venture out on the limb as far as you think safe, and not let go the beetle, I'll make you a present of a silver dollar as soon as you get down."

"I'm gwine, Massa Will—deed I is," replied the negro very promptly—"mos' out to the eend now."

"*Out to the end!*" here fairly screamed Legrand; "do you say you are out to the end of that limb?"

"Soon be to de eend, massa—o-o-o-o-oh! Lor-gol-a-marcy! what is dis here pon de tree?"

"Well!" cried Legrand, highly delighted, "what is it?"

"Why 'taint noffin but a skull—somebody bin lef him dead up de tree, and de crows done gobble ebery bit ob de meat off."

"A skull, you say!—very well,—how is it fastened to the limb?—what holds it on?"

"Sure nuff, massa; mus look. Why dis berry curious sarcumstance, pon my word—dare's a great big nail in de skull, what fastens ob it on to de tree."

"Well, now, Jupiter, do exactly as I tell you—do you hear?"

"Yes, massa."

"Pay attention, then—find the left eye of the skull."

"Hum! hoo! dat's good! why dey ain't no eye lef at all."

"Curse your stupidity! do you know your right hand from your left?"

"Yes, I knows dat—knows all about dat—'tis my left hand what I chops de wood wid."

"To be sure! you are left-handed; and your left eye is on the same side as your left hand. Now, I suppose, you can find the left eye of the skull, or the place where the left eye has been. Have you found it?"

Here was a long pause. At length the negro asked—

"Is de left eye of de skull pon de same side as de lef hand of de skull too?—cause de skull ain't got not

a bit ob a hand at all—nebber mind! I got de lef eye now—here de lef eye! what must do wid it?"

"Let the beetle drop through it, as far as the string will reach—but be careful and not let go your hold of the string."

"All dat done, Massa Will; mighty easy ting for to put de bug fru de hole—look out for him dere below!"

During this colloquy no portion of Jupiter's person could be seen; but the beetle, which he had suffered to descend, was now visible at the end of the string, and glistened, like a globe of burnished gold, in the last rays of the setting sun, some of which still faintly illumined the eminence upon which we stood. The *scarabæus* hung quite clear of any branches, and, if allowed to fall, would have fallen at our feet. Legrand immediately took the scythe, and cleared with it a circular space, three or four yards in diameter, just beneath the insect, and, having accomplished this, ordered Jupiter to let go the string and come down from the tree.

Driving a peg, with great nicety, into the ground, at the precise spot where the beetle fell, my friend now produced from his pocket a tape-measure. Fastening one end of this at that point of the trunk of the tree which was nearest the peg, he unrolled it till it reached the peg and thence further unrolled it, in the direction already established by the two points of the tree and the peg, for the distance of fifty feet—Jupiter clearing away the brambles with the scythe. At the spot thus

attained a second peg was driven, and about this, as a centre, a rude circle, about four feet in diameter, described. Taking now a spade himself, and giving one to Jupiter and one to me, Legrand begged us to set about digging as quickly as possible.

To speak the truth, I had no special relish for such amusement at any time, and, at that particular moment, would willingly have declined it; for the night was coming on, and I felt much fatigued with the exercise already taken; but I saw no mode of escape, and was fearful of disturbing my poor friend's equanimity by a refusal. Could I have depended, indeed, upon Jupiter's aid, I would have had no hesitation in attempting to get the lunatic home by force; but I was too well assured of the old negro's disposition, to hope that he would assist me, under any circumstances, in a personal contest with his master. I made no doubt that the latter had been infected with some of the innumerable Southern superstitions about money buried, and that his phantasy had received confirmation by the finding of the *scarabæus,* or, perhaps, by Jupiter's obstinacy in maintaining it to be "a bug of real gold." A mind disposed to lunacy would readily be led away by such suggestions—especially if chiming in with favorite preconceived ideas—and then I called to mind the poor fellow's speech about the beetle's being "the index of his fortune." Upon the whole, I was sadly vexed and puzzled, but, at length, I concluded to make a virtue of necessity—to dig with a

good will, and thus the sooner to convince the visionary, by ocular demonstration, of the fallacy of the opinion he entertained.

The lanterns having been lit, we all fell to work with a zeal worthy a more rational cause; and, as the glare fell upon our persons and implements, I could not help thinking how picturesque a group we composed, and how strange and suspicious our labors must have appeared to any interloper who, by chance, might have stumbled upon our whereabouts.

We dug very steadily for two hours. Little was said; and our chief embarrassment lay in the yelpings of the dog, who took exceeding interest in our proceedings. He, at length, became so obstreperous that we grew fearful of his giving the alarm to some stragglers in the vicinity,—or, rather, this was the apprehension of Legrand;—for myself, I should have rejoiced at any interruption which might have enabled me to get the wanderer home. The noise was, at length, very effectually silenced by Jupiter, who, getting out of the hole with a dogged air of deliberation, tied the brute's mouth up with one of his suspenders, and then returned, with a grave chuckle, to his task.

When the time mentioned had expired, we had reached a depth of five feet, and yet no signs of any treasure became manifest. A general pause ensued, and I began to hope that the farce was at an end. Legrand, however, although evidently much disconcerted, wiped his brow thoughtfully and recommenced.

We had excavated the entire circle of four feet diameter, and now we slightly enlarged the limit, and went to the farther depth of two feet. Still nothing appeared. The gold-seeker, whom I sincerely pitied, at length clambered from the pit, with the bitterest disappointment imprinted upon every feature, and proceeded, slowly and reluctantly, to put on his coat, which he had thrown off at the beginning of his labor. In the meantime I made no remark. Jupiter, at a signal from his master, began to gather up his tools. This done, and the dog having been unmuzzled, we turned in profound silence toward home.

We had taken, perhaps, a dozen steps in this direction, when, with a loud oath, Legrand strode up to Jupiter, and seized him by the collar. The astonished negro opened his eyes and mouth to the fullest extent, let fall the spades, and fell upon his knees.

"You scoundrel!" said Legrand, hissing out the syllables from between his clenched teeth—"you infernal black villain!—speak, I tell you—answer me this instant, without prevarication!—which—which is your left eye?"

"Oh, my golly, Massa Will! ain't dis here my lef eye for sartain?" roared the terrified Jupiter, placing his hand upon his *right* organ of vision, and holding it there with a desperate pertinacity, as if in immediate dread of his master's attempt at a gouge.

"I thought so!—I knew it! hurrah!" vociferated Legrand, letting the negro go and executing a series

of curvets and caracols, much to the astonishment of his valet, who, arising from his knees, looked, mutely, from his master to myself, and then from myself to his master.

"Come! we must go back," said the latter, "the game's not up yet;" and he again led the way to the tulip-tree.

"Jupiter," said he, when he reached its foot, "come here! was the skull nailed to the limb with the face outward, or with the face to the limb?"

"De face was out, massa, so dat de crows could get at de eyes good, widout any trouble."

"Well, then, was it this eye or that through which you dropped the beetle?"—here Legrand touched each of Jupiter's eyes.

"'Twas dis eye, massa—de lef eye—jis as you tell me," and here it was his right eye that the negro indicated.

"That will do—we must try it again."

Here my friend, about whose madness I now saw, or fancied that I saw, certain indications of method, removed the peg which marked the spot where the beetle fell, to a spot about three inches to the westward of its former position. Taking, now, the tape measure from the nearest point of the trunk to the peg, as before, and continuing the extension in a straight line to the distance of fifty feet, a spot was indicated, removed, by several yards, from the point at which we had been digging.

Around the new position a circle, somewhat larger than in the former instance, was now described, and we again set to work with the spade. I was dreadfully weary, but scarcely understanding what had occasioned the change in my thoughts, I felt no longer any great aversion from the labor imposed. I had become most unaccountably interested—nay, even excited. Perhaps there was something, amid all the extravagant demeanor of Legrand—some air of forethought, or of deliberation, which impressed me. I dug eagerly, and now and then caught myself actually looking, with something that very much resembled expectation, for the fancied treasure, the vision of which had demented my unfortunate companion. At a period when such vagaries of thought most fully possessed me, and when we had been at work perhaps an hour and a half, we were again interrupted by the violent howlings of the dog. His uneasiness, in the first instance, had been, evidently, the result of playfulness or caprice, but he now assumed a bitter and serious tone. Upon Jupiter's again attempting to muzzle him, he made furious resistance, and, leaping into the hole, tore up the mould frantically with his claws. In a few seconds he had uncovered a mass of human bones, forming two complete skeletons, intermingled with several buttons of metal, and what appeared to be the dust of decayed woolen. One or two strokes of a spade upturned the blade of a large Span-

ish knife, and, as we dug farther, three or four loose pieces of gold and silver coin came to light.

At sight of these the joy of Jupiter could scarcely be restrained, but the countenance of his master wore an air of extreme disappointment. He urged us, however, to continue our exertions, and the words were hardly uttered when I stumbled and fell forward, having caught the toe of my boot in a large ring of iron that lay half buried in the loose earth.

We now worked in earnest, and never did I pass ten minutes of more intense excitement. During this interval we had fairly unearthed an oblong chest of wood, which, from its perfect preservation and wonderful hardness, had plainly been subjected to some mineralizing process—perhaps that of the bichloride of mercury. This box was three feet and a half long, three feet broad, and two and a half feet deep. It was firmly secured by bands of wrought iron, riveted, and forming a kind of open trellis-work over the whole. On each side of the chest, near the top, were three rings of iron—six in all—by means of which a firm hold could be obtained by six persons. Our utmost united endeavors served only to disturb the coffer very slightly in its bed. We at once saw the impossibility of removing so great a weight. Luckily, the sole fastenings of the lid consisted of two sliding bolts. These we drew back—trembling and panting with anxiety. In an instant, a treasure of incalculable value lay gleaming before us. As the rays of the

lanterns fell within the pit, there flashed upward a glow and a glare, from a confused heap of gold and of jewels, that absolutely dazzled our eyes.

I shall not pretend to describe the feelings with which I gazed. Amazement was, of course, predominant. Legrand appeared exhausted with excitement, and spoke very few words. Jupiter's countenance wore, for some minutes, as deadly a pallor as it is possible, in the nature of things, for any negro's visage to assume. He seemed stupefied—thunder-stricken. Presently he fell upon his knees in the pit, and burying his naked arms up to the elbows in gold, let them there remain, as if enjoying the luxury of a bath. At length, with a deep sigh, he exclaimed, as if in a soliloquy:

"And dis all cum ob de goole-bug! de putty goole-bug! de poor little goole-bug, what I boosed in that sabage kind of style! Ain't you shamed ob yourself, nigger?—answer me dat!"

It became necessary, at last, that I should arouse both master and valet to the expediency of removing the treasure. It was growing late, and it behooved us to make exertion, that we might get everything housed before daylight. It was difficult to say what should be done, and much time was spent in deliberation—so confused were the ideas of all. We, finally, lightened the box by removing two-thirds of its contents, when we were enabled, with some trouble, to raise it from the hole. The articles taken out were

deposited among the brambles, and the dog left to guard them, with strict orders from Jupiter neither, upon any pretence, to stir from the spot, nor to open his mouth until our return. We then hurriedly made for home with the chest; reaching the hut in safety, but after excessive toil, at one o'clock in the morning. Worn out as we were, it was not in human nature to do more immediately. We rested until two, and had supper; starting for the hills immediately afterward, armed with three stout sacks, which, by good luck, were upon the premises. A little before four we arrived at the pit, divided the remainder of the booty, as equally as might be, among us, and, leaving the holes unfilled, again set out for the hut, at which, for the second time, we deposited our golden burdens, just as the first faint streaks of the dawn gleamed from over the tree-tops in the East.

We were now thoroughly broken down; but the intense excitement of the time denied us repose. After an unquiet slumber of some three or four hours' duration, we arose, as if by preconcert, to make examination of our treasure.

The chest had been full to the brim, and we spent the whole day, and the greater part of the next night, in a scrutiny of its contents. There had been nothing like order or arrangement. Everything had been heaped in promiscuously. Having assorted all with care, we found ourselves possessed of even vaster wealth than we had at first supposed. In coin there

was rather more than four hundred and fifty thousand dollars—estimating the value of the pieces, as accurately as we could, by the tables of the period. There was not a particle of silver. All was gold of antique date and of great variety—French, Spanish, and German money, with a few English guineas, and some counters, of which we had never seen specimens before. There were several very large and heavy coins, so worn that we could make nothing of their inscriptions. There was no American money. The value of the jewels we found more difficulty in estimating. There were diamonds—some of them exceedingly large and fine—a hundred and ten in all, and not one of them small; eighteen rubies of remarkable brilliancy;—three hundred and ten emeralds, all very beautiful; and twenty-one sapphires, with an opal. These stones had all been broken from their settings and thrown loose in the chest. The settings themselves, which we picked out from among the other gold, appeared to have been beaten up with hammers, as if to prevent identification. Besides all this, there was a vast quantity of solid gold ornaments; nearly two hundred massive finger and ear-rings; rich chains —thirty of these, if I remember; eighty-three very large and heavy crucifixes; five gold censers of great value; a prodigious golden punch-bowl, ornamented with richly chased vine-leaves and Bacchanalian figures; with two sword-handles exquisitely embossed, and many other smaller articles which I cannot recol-

lect. The weight of these valuables exceeded three hundred and fifty pounds avoirdupois; and in this estimate I have not included one hundred and ninety-seven superb gold watches; three of the number being worth each five hundred dollars, if one. Many of them were very old, and as timekeepers valueless; the works having suffered, more or less, from corrosion—but all were richly jewelled and in cases of great worth. We estimated the entire contents of the chest, that night, at a million and a half of dollars; and upon the subsequent disposal of the trinkets and jewels (a few being retained for our own use), it was found that we had greatly undervalued the treasure.

When, at length, we had concluded our examination, and the intense excitement of the time had, in some measure, subsided, Legrand, who saw that I was dying with impatience for a solution of this most extraordinary riddle, entered into a full detail of all the circumstances connected with it.

"You remember," said he, "the night when I handed you the rough sketch I had made of the *scarabæus*. You recollect also, that I became quite vexed with you for insisting that my drawing resembled a death's head. When you first made this assertion I thought you were jesting; but afterward I called to mind the peculiar spots on the back of the insect, and admitted to myself that your remark had some little foundation in fact. Still, the sneer at my graphic powers irritated me—for I am considered a good artist—and,

therefore, when you handed me the scrap of parchment, I was about to crumple it up and throw it angrily into the fire."

"The scrap of paper, you mean," said I.

"No; it had much of the appearance of paper, and at first I supposed it to be such, but when I came to draw upon it, I discovered it at once to be a piece of very thin parchment. It was quite dirty, you remember. Well, as I was in the very act of crumpling it up, my glance fell upon the sketch at which you had been looking, and you may imagine my astonishment when I perceived in fact, the figure of a death's-head just where, it seemed to me, I had made the drawing of the beetle. For a moment I was too much amazed to think with accuracy. I knew that my design was very different in detail from this—although there was a certain similarity in general outline. Presently I took a candle, and seating myself at the other end of the room, proceeded to scrutinize the parchment more closely. Upon turning it over, I saw my own sketch upon the reverse, just as I had made it. My first idea, now, was mere surprise at the really remarkable similarity of outline—at the singular coincidence involved in the fact that, unknown to me, there should have been a skull upon the other side of the parchment, immediately beneath my figure of the *scarabæus,* and that this skull, not only in outline, but in size, should so closely resemble my drawing. I say the singularity of this coincidence abso-

lutely stupefied me for a time. This is the usual effect of such coincidences. The mind struggles to establish a connection—a sequence of cause and effect—and, being unable to do so, suffers a species of temporary paralysis. But, when I recovered from this stupor, there dawned upon me gradually a conviction which startled me even far more than the coincidence. I began distinctly, positively, to remember that there had been *no* drawing upon the parchment, when I made my sketch of the *scarabæus*. I became perfectly certain of this; for I recollected turning up first one side and then the other, in search of the cleanest spot. Had the skull been there then, of course I could not have failed to notice it. Here was indeed a mystery which I felt it impossible to explain; but, even at that early moment, there seemed to glimmer, faintly, within the most remote and secret chambers of my intellect, a glow-worm-like conception of that truth which last night's adventure brought to so magnificent a demonstration. I arose at once, and putting the parchment securely away, dismissed all further reflection until I should be alone.

"When you had gone, and when Jupiter was fast asleep, I betook myself to a more methodical investigation of the affair. In the first place I considered the manner in which the parchment had come into my possession. The spot where we discovered the *scarabæus* was on the coast of the main land, about a mile eastward of the island, and but a short distance

above high-water mark. Upon my taking hold of it, it gave me a sharp bite, which caused me to let it drop. Jupiter, with his accustomed caution, before seizing the insect, which had flown toward him, looked about him for a leaf, or something of that nature, by which to take hold of it. It was at this moment that his eyes, and mine also, fell upon the scrap of parchment, which I then supposed to be paper. It was lying half buried in the sand, a corner sticking up. Near the spot where we found it, I observed the remnants of the hull of what appeared to have been a ship's long-boat. The wreck seemed to have been there for a very great while; for the resemblance to boat timbers could scarcely be traced.

"Well, Jupiter picked up the parchment, wrapped the beetle in it, and gave it to me. Soon afterward we turned to go home, and on the way met Lieutenant G——. I showed him the insect, and he begged me to let him take it to the fort. Upon my consenting, he thrust it forthwith into his waistcoat pocket, without the parchment in which it had been wrapped, and which I had continued to hold in my hand during his inspection. Perhaps he dreaded my changing my mind, and thought it best to make sure of the prize at once—you know how enthusiastic he is on all subjects connected with Natural History. At the same time, without being conscious of it, I must have deposited the parchment in my own pocket.

"You remember that when I went to the table, for the purpose of making a sketch of the beetle, I found no paper where it was usually kept. I looked in the drawer, and found none there. I searched my pockets, hoping to find an old letter, when my hand fell upon the parchment. I thus detail the precise mode in which it came into my possession; for the circumstances impressed me with peculiar force.

"No doubt you will think me fanciful—but I had already established a kind of *connection.* I had put together two links of a great chain. There was a boat lying upon a sea-coast, and not far from the boat was a parchment—*not a paper*—with a skull depicted upon it. You will, of course, ask 'where is the connection?' I reply that the skull, or death's-head, is the well-known emblem of the pirate. The flag of the death's-head is hoisted in all engagements.

"I have said that the scrap was parchment, and not paper. Parchment is durable—almost imperishable. Matters of little moment are rarely consigned to parchment; since, for the mere ordinary purposes of drawing or writing, it is not nearly so well adapted as paper. This reflection suggested some meaning—some relevancy—in the death's-head. I did not fail to observe, also, the *form* of the parchment. Although one of its corners had been, by some accident, destroyed, it could be seen that the original form was oblong. It was just such a slip, indeed, as might have been chosen for a memorandum—for a record of some-

thing to be long remembered and carefully preserved."

"But," I interposed, "you say that the skull was *not* upon the parchment when you made the drawing of the beetle. How then do you trace any connection between the boat and the skull—since this latter, according to your own admission, must have been designed (God only knows how or by whom) at some period subsequent to your sketching the *scarabæus?*"

"Ah, hereupon turns the whole mystery; although the secret, at this point, I had comparatively little difficulty in solving. My steps were sure, and could afford but a single result. I reasoned, for example, thus: When I drew the *scarabæus,* there was no skull apparent upon the parchment. When I had completed the drawing I gave it to you, and observed you narrowly until you returned it. *You,* therefore, did not design the skull, and no one else was present to do it. Then it was not done by human agency. And nevertheless it was done.

"At this stage of my reflections I endeavored to remember, and *did* remember, with entire distinctness, every incident which occurred about the period in question. The weather was chilly (oh, rare and happy accident!), and a fire was blazing upon the hearth. I was heated with exercise and sat near the table. You, however, had drawn a chair close to the chimney. Just as I placed the parchment in your hand, and as you were in the act of inspecting it, Wolf, the Newfoundland, entered, and leaped upon your shoulders.

With your left hand you caressed him and kept him off, while your right, holding the parchment, was permitted to fall listlessly between your knees, and in close proximity to the fire. At one moment I thought the blaze had caught it, and was about to caution you, but, before I could speak, you had withdrawn it, and were engaged in its examination. When I considered all these particulars, I doubted not for a moment that *heat* had been the agent in bringing to light, upon the parchment, the skull which I saw designed upon it. You are well aware that chemical preparations exist, and have existed time out of mind, by means of which it is possible to write upon either paper or vellum, so that the characters shall become visible only when subjected to the action of fire. Zaffre, digested in *aqua regia,* and diluted with four times its weight of water, is sometimes employed; a green tint results. The regulus of cobalt, dissolved in spirit of nitre, gives a red. These colors disappear at longer or shorter intervals after the material written upon cools, but again become apparent upon the re-application of heat.

"I now scrutinized the death's-head with care. Its outer edges—the edges of the drawing nearest the edge of the vellum—were far more *distinct* than the others. It was clear that the action of the caloric had been imperfect or unequal. I immediately kindled a fire, and subjected every portion of the parchment to a glowing heat. At first, the only effect was the

strengthening of the faint lines in the skull; but, upon persevering in the experiment, there became visible, at the corner of the slip, diagonally opposite to the spot in which the death's-head was delineated, the figure of what I at first supposed to be a goat. A closer scrutiny, however, satisfied me that it was intended for a kid."

"Ha! ha!" said I, "to be sure I have no right to laugh at you—a million and a half of money is too serious a matter for mirth—but you are not about to establish a third link in your chain—you will not find any especial connection between your pirates and a goat—pirates, you know, have nothing to do with goats; they appertain to the farming interest."

"But I have just said that the figure was *not* that of a goat."

"Well, a kid then—pretty much the same thing."

"Pretty much, but not altogether," said Legrand. "You may have heard of one *Captain* Kidd. I at once looked upon the figure of the animal as a kind of punning or hieroglyphical signature. I say signature; because its position upon the vellum suggested this idea. The death's-head at the corner diagonally opposite, had, in the same manner, the air of a stamp, or seal. But I was sorely put out by the absence of all else—of the body to my imagined instrument—of the text for my context."

"I presume you expected to find a letter between the stamp and the signature."

"Something of that kind. The fact is, I felt irresistibly impressed with a presentiment of some vast good fortune impending. I can scarcely say why. Perhaps, after all, it was rather a desire than an actual belief;—but do you know that Jupiter's silly words, about the bug being of solid gold, had a remarkable effect upon my fancy? And then the series of accidents and coincidents—these were so *very* extraordinary. Do you observe how mere an accident it was that these events should have occurred upon the *sole* day of all the year in which it has been, or may be sufficiently cool for fire, and that without the fire, or without the intervention of the dog at the precise moment in which he appeared, I should never have become aware of the death's-head, and so never the possessor of the treasure."

"But proceed—I am all impatience."

"Well; you have heard, of course, the many stories current—the thousand vague rumors afloat about money buried, somewhere upon the Atlantic coast, by Kidd and his associates. These rumors must have had some foundation in fact. And that the rumors have existed so long and so continuous, could have resulted, it appeared to me, only from the circumstance of the buried treasures still *remaining* entombed. Had Kidd concealed his plunder for a time, and afterward reclaimed it, the rumors would scarcely have reached us in their present unvarying form. You will observe that the stories told are all about money-seekers, not

about money-finders. Had the pirate recovered his money, there the affair would have dropped. It seemed to me that some accident—say the loss of a memorandum indicating its locality—had deprived him of the means of recovering it, and that this accident had become known to his followers, who otherwise might never have heard that the treasure had been concealed at all, and who, busying themselves in vain, because unguided, attempts to regain it, had given first birth, and then universal currency, to the reports which are now so common. Have you ever heard of any important treasure being unearthed along the coast?"

"Never."

"But that Kidd's accumulations were immense, is well known. I took it for granted, therefore, that the earth still held them; and you will scarcely be surprised when I tell you that I felt a hope, nearly amounting to certainty, that the parchment so strangely found involved a lost record of the place of deposit."

"But how did you proceed?"

"I held the vellum again to the fire, after increasing the heat, but nothing appeared. I now thought it possible that the coating of dirt might have something to do with the failure; so I carefully rinsed the parchment by pouring warm water over it, and, having done this, I placed it in a tin pan, with the skull downward, and put the pan upon a furnace of lighted char-

coal. In a few minutes, the pan having become thoroughly heated, I removed the slip, and, to my inexpressible joy, found it spotted, in several places, with what appeared to be figures arranged in lines. Again I placed it in the pan, and suffered it to remain another minute. Upon taking it off, the whole was just as you see it now."

Here Legrand, having re-heated the parchment, submitted it to my inspection. The following characters were rudely traced, in a red tint, between the death's-head and the goat:

"53‡‡†305))6*;4826)4‡.;806*;48†8¶60))85;1‡(;:‡*8†83(88)5*†;46(;88*96*?;8)*‡(;485);5*†2:*‡(;4956*2(5*—4)8¶8*;4069285);)6†8)4‡‡;1(‡9;48081;8:8‡1;48†85;4)485†528806*81(‡9;48;(88;4(‡?34;48)4‡;161;:188;‡?;"

"But," said I, returning him the slip, "I am as much in the dark as ever. Were all the jewels of Golconda awaiting me upon my solution of this enigma, I am quite sure that I should be unable to earn them."

"And yet," said Legrand, "the solution is by no means so difficult as you might be led to imagine from the first hasty inspection of the characters. These characters, as any one might readily guess, form a cipher—that is to say, they convey a meaning; but then from what is known of Kidd, I could not suppose him capable of constructing any of the more abstruse

cryptographs. I made up my mind, at once, that this was a simple species—such, however, as would appear, to the crude intellect of the sailor, absolutely insoluble without the key."

"And you really solved it?"

"Readily; I have solved others of an abstruseness ten thousand times greater. Circumstances, and a certain bias of mind, have led me to take interest in such riddles, and it may well be doubted whether human ingenuity can construct an enigma of the kind which human ingenuity may not, by proper application, resolve. In fact, having once established connected and legible characters, I scarcely gave a thought to the mere difficulty of developing their import.

"In the present case—indeed in all cases of secret writing—the first question regards the *language* of the cipher; for the principles of solution, so far, especially, as the more simple ciphers are concerned, depend upon, and are varied by, the genius of the particular idiom. In general, there is no alternative but experiment (directed by probabilities) of every tongue known to him who attempts the solution, until the true one be attained. But, with the cipher now before us all difficulty was removed by the signature. The pun upon the word 'Kidd' is appreciable in no other language than the English. But for this consideration I should have begun my attempts with the Spanish and French, as the tongues in which a secret of this kind would most naturally have been written by a

pirate of the Spanish main. As it was, I assumed the cryptograph to be English.

"You observe there are no divisions between the words. Had there been divisions the task would have been comparatively easy. In such cases I should have commenced with a collation and analysis of the shorter words, and, had a word of a single letter occurred, as is most likely (*a* or *I*, for example,) I should have considered the solution as assured. But, there being no division, my first step was to ascertain the predominant letters, as well as the least frequent. Counting all, I constructed a table thus:

Of	the	character	8	there	are	33.
"	"	"	;	"	"	26.
"	"	"	4	"	"	19.
"	"	"	‡)	"	"	16.
"	"	"	*	"	"	13.
"	"	"	5	"	"	12.
"	"	"	6	"	"	11.
"	"	"	†1	"	"	8.
"	"	"	0	"	"	6.
"	"	"	92	"	"	5.
"	"	"	:3	"	"	4.
"	"	"	?	"	"	3.
"	"	"	¶	"	"	2.
"	"	"	—.	"	"	1.

"Now, in English, the letter which most frequently occurs is *e*. Afterward, the succession runs thus: *a o i d h n r s t u y c f g l m w b k p q x z*. E predominates so remarkably, that an individual sentence of any length is rarely seen, in which it is not the prevailing character.

"Here, then, we have, in the very beginning, the groundwork for something more than a mere guess. The general use which may be made of the table is obvious—but, in this particular cipher, we shall only very partially require its aid. As our predominant character is 8, we will commence by assuming it as the *e* of the natural alphabet. To verify the supposition, let us observe if the 8 be seen often in couples—for *e* is doubled with great frequency in English—in such words, for example, as 'meet,' 'fleet,' 'speed,' 'seen,' 'been,' 'agree,' etc. In the present instance we see it doubled no less than five times, although the cryptograph is brief.

"Let us assume 8, then, as *e*. Now, of all *words* in the language, 'the' is most usual; let us see, therefore, whether there are not repetitions of any three characters, in the same order of collocation, the last of them being 8. If we discover repetitions of such letters, so arranged, they will most probably represent the word 'the.' Upon inspection, we find no less than seven such arrangements, the characters being ;48. We may, therefore, assume that ; represents *t*, 4 represents *h*, and 8 represents *e*—the last being now well confirmed. Thus a great step has been taken.

"But, having established a single word, we are enabled to establish a vastly important point; that is to say, several commencements and terminations of other words. Let us refer, for example, to the last instance but one, in which the combination ;48 occurs—not far from the end of the cipher. We know that 'the'; immediately ensuing is the commencement of a word, and, of the six characters succeeding this 'the,' we are cognizant of no less than five. Let us set these characters down, thus, by the letters we know them to represent, leaving a space for the unknown—

t eeth

"Here we are enabled, at once, to discard the *'th,'* as forming no portion of the word commencing with the first *t;* since, by experiment of the entire alphabet for a letter adapted to the vacancy, we perceive that no word can be formed of which this *th* can be a part. We are thus narrowed into.

t ee,

and, going through the alphabet, if necessary, as before, we arrive at the word 'tree,' as the sole possible reading. We thus gain another letter, *r,* represented by (, with the words 'the tree' in juxtaposition.

"Looking beyond these words, for a short distance, we again see the combination ;48, and employ it by

way of *termination* to what immediately precedes. We have thus this arrangement:

the tree ;4(‡?34 the,

or, substituting the natural letters, where known, it reads thus:

the tree thr‡?3h the.

"Now, if, in place of the unknown characters, we leave blank spaces, or substitute dots, we read thus:

the tree thr...h the,

when the word '*through*' makes itself evident at once. But this discovery gives us three new letters, *o*, *u*, and *g*, represented by ‡, ?, and 3.

"Looking now, narrowly, through the cipher for combinations of known characters, we find, not very far from the beginning, this arrangement,

83(88, or egree,

which plainly, is the conclusion of the word 'degree,' and gives us another letter, *d*, represented by †.

"Four letters beyond the word 'degree,' we perceive the combination.

;46(;88.

"Translating the known characters, and representing the unknown by dots, as before, we read thus:

th.rtee,

an arrangement immediately suggestive of the word 'thirteen,' and again furnishing us with two new characters, *i* and *n*, represented by 6 and *.

"Referring, now, to the beginning of the cryptograph, we find the combination.

53‡‡†.

"Translating as before, we obtain

.good,

which assures us that the first letter is *A*, and that the first two words are 'A good.'

"It is now time that we arrange our key, as far as discovered, in a tabular form, to avoid confusion. It will stand thus:

5	represents	a
†	"	d
8	"	e
3	"	g
4	"	h
6	"	i
*	"	n
‡	"	o
(	"	r
;	"	t
?	"	u

"We have, therefore, no less than eleven of the most important letters represented, and it will be unnecessary to proceed with the details of the solution. I have said enough to convince you that ciphers of this nature are readily soluble, and to give you some insight into the *rationale* of their development. But be assured that the specimen before us appertains to the very simplest species of cryptograph. It now only remains to give you the full translation of the characters upon the parchment, as unriddled. Here it is:

"'A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes northeast and by north main branch seventh limb east side shoot from the left eye of the death's head a bee-line from the tree through the shot fifty feet out.'"

"But," said I, "the enigma seems still in as bad a condition as ever. How is it possible to extort a meaning from all this jargon about 'devil's seats,' 'death's-heads,' and 'bishop's hotels'?"

"I confess," replied Legrand, "that the matter still wears a serious aspect, when regarded with a casual glance. My first endeavor was to divide the sentence into the natural division intended by the cryptographist."

"You mean, to punctuate it?"

"Something of that kind."

"But how was it possible to effect this?"

I reflected that it had been a *point* with the writer to run his words together without division, so as to increase the difficulty of solution. Now, a not over-acute man, in pursuing such an object, would be nearly certain to overdo the matter. When, in the course of his composition, he arrived at a break in his subject which would naturally require a pause, or a point, he would be exceedingly apt to run his characters, at this place, more than usually close together. If you will observe the MS., in the present instance, you will easily detect five such cases of unusual crowding. Acting upon this hint, I made the division thus:

" 'A good glass in the bishop's hostel in the devil's seat —forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes—northeast and by north—main branch seventh limb east side—shoot from the left eye of the death's head—a bee-line from the tree through the shot fifty feet out.' "

"Even this division," said I, "leaves me still in the dark."

"It left me also in the dark," replied Legrand, "for a few days; during which I made diligent inquiry in the neighborhood of Sullivan's Island, for any building which went by name of the 'Bishop's Hotel'; for, of course, I dropped the obsolete word 'hostel.' Gaining no information on the subject, I was on the point of extending my sphere of search, and proceeding in

a more systematic manner, when, one morning, it entered into my head, quite suddenly, that this 'Bishop's Hostel' might have some reference to an old family, of the name of Bessop, which, time out of mind, had held possession of an ancient manor-house, about four miles to the northward of the island. I accordingly went over to the plantation, and re-instituted my inquiries among the older negroes of the place. At length one of the most aged of the women said that she had heard of such a place as *Bessop's Castle,* and thought that she could guide me to it, but that it was not a castle, nor a tavern, but a high rock.

"I offered to pay her well for her trouble, and, after some demur, she consented to accompany me to the spot. We found it without much difficulty, when, dismissing her, I proceeded to examine the place. The 'castle' consisted of an irregular assemblage of cliffs and rocks—one of the latter being quite remarkable for its height as well as for its insulated and artificial appearance. I clambered to its apex, and then felt much at a loss as to what should be next done.

"While I was busied in reflection, my eyes fell upon a narrow ledge in the eastern face of the rock, perhaps a yard below the summit upon which I stood. This ledge projected about eighteen inches, and was not more than a foot wide, while a niche in the cliff just above it gave it a rude resemblance to one of the hollow-backed chairs used by our ancestors. I made

no doubt that here was the 'devil's-seat' alluded to in the MS., and now I seemed to grasp the full secret of the riddle.

"The 'good glass,' I knew, could have reference to nothing but a telescope; for the word 'glass' is rarely employed in any other sense by seamen. Now here, I at once saw, was a telescope to be used, and a definite point of view, *admitting no variation,* from which to use it. Nor did I hesitate to believe that the phrases, 'forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes,' and 'northeast and by north,' were intended as directions for the levelling of the glass. Greatly excited by these discoveries, I hurried home, procured a telescope, and returned to the rock.

"I let myself down to the ledge, and found that it was impossible to retain a seat upon it except in one particular position. This fact confirmed my preconceived idea. I proceeded to use the glass. Of course, the 'forty-one degrees and thirteen minutes' could allude to nothing but elevation above the visible horizon, since the horizontal direction was clearly indicated by the words, 'northeast and by north,' This latter direction I at once established by means of a pocket-compass; then, pointing the glass as nearly at an angle of forty-one degrees of elevation as I could do it by guess, I moved it cautiously up or down, until my attention was arrested by a circular rift or opening in the foliage of a large tree that overtopped its fellows in the distance. In the centre of this rift I per-

ceived a white spot, but could not, at first, distinguish what it was. Adjusting the focus of the telescope, I again looked, and now made it out to be a human skull.

"Upon this discovery I was so sanguine as to consider the enigma solved; for the phrase 'main branch, seventh limb, east side,' could refer only to the position of the skull upon the tree, while 'shoot from the left eye of the death's-head' admitted, also, of but one interpretation, in regard to a search for buried treasure. I perceived that the design was to drop a bullet from the left eye of the skull, and that a bee-line, or, in other words, a straight line, drawn from the nearest point of the trunk through the 'shot' (or the spot where the bullet fell), and thence extended to a distance of fifty feet, would indicate a definite point—and beneath this point I thought it at least *possible* that a deposit of value lay concealed."

"All this," I said, "is exceedingly clear, and, although ingenious, still simple and explicit. When you left the 'Bishop's Hotel,' what then?"

"Why, having carefully taken the bearings of the tree, I turned homeward. The instant that I left 'the devil's-seat,' however, the circular rift vanished; nor could I get a glimpse of it afterward, turn as I would. What seems to me the chief ingenuity in this whole business, is the fact (for repeated experiment has convinced me it *is* a fact) that the circular opening in question is visible from no other attainable point of

view than that afforded by the narrow ledge upon the face of the rock.

"In this expedition to the 'Bishop's Hotel' I had been attended by Jupiter, who had, no doubt, observed, for some weeks past, the abstraction of my demeanor, and took especial care not to leave me alone. But, on the next day, getting up very early, I contrived to give him the slip, and went into the hills in search of the tree. After much toil I found it. When I came home at night my valet proposed to give me a flogging. With the rest of the adventure I believe you are as well acquainted as myself."

"I suppose," said I, "you missed the spot, in the first attempt at digging, through Jupiter's stupidity in letting the bug fall through the right instead of through the left eye of the skull."

"Precisely. This mistake made a difference of about two inches and a half in the 'shot'—that is to say, in the position of the peg nearest the tree; and had the treasure been *beneath* the 'shot,' the error would have been of little moment; but 'the shot,' together with the nearest point of the tree, were merely two points for the establishment of a line of direction; of course the error, however trivial in the beginning, increased as we proceeded with the line, and by the time we had gone fifty feet threw us quite off the scent. But for my deep-seated impressions that treasure was here somewhere actually buried, we might have had all our labor in vain."

"But your grandiloquence, and your conduct in swinging the beetle—how excessively odd! I was sure you were mad. And why did you insist upon letting fall the bug, instead of a bullet, from the skull?"

"Why, to be frank, I felt somewhat annoyed by your evident suspicions touching my sanity, and so resolved to punish you quietly, in my own way, by a little bit of sober mystification. For this reason I swung the beetle, and for this reason I let it fall from the tree. An observation of yours about its great weight suggested the latter idea."

"Yes, I perceive; and now there is only one point which puzzles me. What are we to make of the skeletons found in the hole?"

"That is a question I am no more able to answer than yourself. There seems, however, only one plausible way of accounting for them—and yet it is dreadful to believe in such atrocity as my suggestion would imply. It is clear that Kidd—if Kidd indeed secreted this treasure, which I doubt not—it is clear that he must have had assistance in the labor. But this labor concluded, he may have thought it expedient to remove all participants in his secret. Perhaps a couple of blows with a mattock were sufficient, while his coadjutors were busy in the pit; perhaps it required a dozen—who shall tell?"

The Party

By Anton Chekhov

Translated by Constance Garnett

I

AFTER the festive dinner with its eight courses and its endless conversation, Olga Mihalovna, whose husband's name-day was being celebrated, went out into the garden. The duty of smiling and talking incessantly, the clatter of the crockery, the stupidity of the servants, the long intervals between the courses, and the stays she had put on to conceal her condition from the visitors, wearied her to exhaustion. She longed to get away from the house, to sit in the shade and rest her heart with thoughts of the baby which was to be born to her in another two months. She was used to these thoughts coming to her as she turned to the left out of the big avenue into the narrow path. Here in the thick shade of the plums and cherry-trees the dry branches used to scratch her neck and shoulders; a spider's web would settle on her face, and there would rise up in her mind the image of a little creature of undetermined sex and undefined features, and it began to seem as though it were not the spider's web that tickled her face and neck caressingly, but that little creature. When, at the end of the path, a thin wicker hurdle came into sight, and behind it

podgy beehives with tiled roofs; when in the motionless, stagnant air there came a smell of hay and honey, and a soft buzzing of bees was audible, then the little creature would take complete possession of Olga Mihalovna. She used to sit down on a bench near the shanty woven of branches, and fall to thinking.

This time, too, she went on as far as the seat, sat down, and began thinking; but instead of the little creature there rose up in her imagination the figures of the grown-up people whom she had just left. She felt dreadfully uneasy that she, the hostess, had deserted her guests, and she remembered how her husband, Pyotr Dmitritch, and her uncle, Nikolay Nikolaitch, had argued at dinner about trial by jury, about the press, and about the higher education of women. Her husband, as usual, argued in order to show off his Conservative ideas before his visitors—and still more in order to disagree with her uncle, whom he disliked. Her uncle contradicted him and wrangled over every word he uttered, so as to show the company that he, Uncle Nikolay Nikolaitch, still retained his youthful freshness of spirit and free-thinking in spite of his fifty-nine years. And towards the end of dinner even Olga Mihalovna herself could not resist taking part and unskilfully attempting to defend university education for women—not that that education stood in need of her defence, but simply because she wanted to annoy her husband, who to her mind was unfair. The guests were wearied by this discussion, but they all thought it necessary to take part in it, and talked a great deal, although

none of them took any interest in trial by jury or the higher education of women. . . .

Olga Mihalovna was sitting on the nearest side of the hurdle near the shanty. The sun was hidden behind the clouds. The trees and the air were overcast as before rain, but in spite of that it was hot and stifling. The hay cut under the trees on the previous day was lying ungathered, looking melancholy, with here and there a patch of colour from the faded flowers, and from it came a heavy, sickly scent. It was still. The other side of the hurdle there was a monotonous hum of bees. . . .

Suddenly she heard footsteps and voices; some one was coming along the path towards the bee-house.

"How stifling it is!" said a feminine voice. "What do you think—is it going to rain, or not?"

"It is going to rain, my charmer, but not before night," a very familiar male voice answered languidly. "There will be a good rain."

Olga Mihalovna calculated that if she made haste to hide in the shanty they would pass by without seeing her, and she would not have to talk and to force herself to smile. She picked up her skirts, bent down and crept into the shanty. At once she felt upon her face, her neck, her arms, the hot air as heavy as steam. If it had not been for the stuffiness and the close smell of rye bread, fennel, and brushwood, which prevented her from breathing freely, it would have been delightful to hide from her visitors here under the thatched roof in the dusk, and to think about the little creature. It was cosy and quiet.

"What a pretty spot!" said a feminine voice. "Let us sit here, Pyotr Dmitritch."

Olga Mihalovna began peeping through a crack between two branches. She saw her husband, Pyotr Dmitritch, and Lubotchka Sheller, a girl of seventeen who had not long left boarding-school. Pyotr Dmitritch, with his hat on the back of his head, languid and indolent from having drunk so much at dinner, slouched by the hurdle and raked the hay into a heap with his foot; Lubotchka, pink with the heat and pretty as ever, stood with her hands behind her, watching the lazy movements of his big handsome person.

Olga Mihalovna knew that her husband was attractive to women, and did not like to see him with them. There was nothing out of the way in Pyotr Dmitritch's lazily raking together the hay in order to sit down on it with Lubotchka and chatter to her of trivialties; there was nothing out of the way, either, in pretty Lubotchka's looking at him with her soft eyes; but yet Olga Mihalovna felt vexed with her husband and frightened and pleased that she could listen to them.

"Sit down, enchantress," said Pyotr Dmitritch, sinking down on the hay and stretching. "That's right. Come, tell me something."

"What next! If I begin telling you anything you will go to sleep."

"Me go to sleep? Allah forbid! Can I go to sleep while eyes like yours are watching me?"

In her husband's words, and in the fact that he was lolling with his hat on the back of his head in the presence of a lady, there was nothing out of the way either. He was spoilt by women, knew that they found him attractive, and had adopted with them a special tone which every one said suited him. With Lubotchka he behaved as with all women. But, all the same, Olga Mihalovna was jealous.

"Tell me, please," said Lubotchka, after a brief silence —"is it true that you are to be tried for something?"

"I? Yes, I am . . . numbered among the transgressors, my charmer."

"But what for?"

"For nothing, but just . . . it's chiefly a question of politics," yawned Pyotr Dmitritch—"the antagonisms of Left and Right. I, an obscurantist and reactionary, ventured in an official paper to make use of an expression offensive in the eyes of such immaculate Gladstones as Vladimir Pavlovitch Vladimirov and our local justice of the peace—Kuzma Grigoritch Vostryakov."

Pyotr Dmitritch yawned again and went on:

"And it is the way with us that you may express disapproval of the sun or the moon, or anything you like, but God preserve you from touching the Liberals! Heaven forbid! A Liberal is like the poisonous dry fungus which covers you with a cloud of dust if you accidentally touch it with your finger."

"What happened to you?"

"Nothing particular. The whole flare-up started from the merest trifle. A teacher, a detestable person of clerical associations, hands to Vostryakov a petition against a tavern-keeper, charging him with insulting language and behaviour in a public place. Everything showed that both the teacher and the tavern-keeper were drunk as cobblers, and that they behaved equally badly. If there had been insulting behaviour, the insult had anyway been mutual. Vostryakov ought to have fined them both for a breach of the peace and have turned them out of the court—that is all. But that's not our way of doing things. With us what stands first is not the person—not the fact itself, but the trade-mark and label. However great a rascal a teacher may be, he is always in the right because he is a teacher; a tavern-keeper is always in the wrong because he is a tavern-keeper and a money-grubber. Vostryakov placed the tavern-keeper under arrest. The man appealed to the Circuit Court; the Circuit Court triumphantly upheld Vostryakov's decision. Well, I stuck to my own opinion. . . . Got a little hot. . . . That was all."

Pyotr Dmitritch spoke calmly with careless irony. In reality the trial that was hanging over him worried him extremely. Olga Mihalovna remembered how on his return from the unfortunate session he had tried to conceal from his household how troubled he was, and how dissatisfied with himself. As an intelligent man he could not help feeling that he had gone too far in expressing his disagreement; and how much lying had been needful to conceal that feeling from himself and from others!

How many unnecessary conversations there had been! How much grumbling and insincere laughter at what was not laughable! When he learned that he was to be brought up before the Court, he seemed at once harassed and depressed; he began to sleep badly, stood oftener than ever at the windows, drumming on the panes with his fingers. And he was ashamed to let his wife see that he was worried, and it vexed her.

"They say you have been in the province of Poltava?" Lubotchka questioned him.

"Yes," answered Pyotr Dmitritch. "I came back the day before yesterday."

"I expect it is very nice there."

"Yes, it is very nice, very nice indeed; in fact, I arrived just in time for the haymaking, I must tell you, and in the Ukraine the haymaking is the most poetical moment of the year. Here we have a big house, a big garden, a lot of servants, and a lot going on, so that you don't see the haymaking; here it all passes unnoticed. There, at the farm, I have a meadow of forty-five acres as flat as my hand. You can see the men mowing from any window you stand at. They are mowing in the meadow, they are mowing in the garden. There are no visitors, no fuss nor hurry either, so that you can't help seeing, feeling, hearing nothing but the haymaking. There is a smell of hay indoors and outdoors. There's the sound of the scythes from sunrise to sunset. Altogether Little Russia is a charming country. Would you believe it, when I was drinking water from the rustic wells and filthy vodka in

some Jew's tavern, when on quiet evenings the strains of the Little Russian fiddle and the tambourines reached me. I was tempted by a fascinating idea—to settle down on my place and live there as long as I chose, far away from Circuit Courts, intellectual conversations, philosophizing women, long dinners. . . ."

Pyotr Dmitritch was not lying. He was unhappy and really longed to rest. And he had visited his Poltava property simply to avoid seeing his study, his servants, his acquaintances, and everything that could remind him of his wounded vanity and his mistakes.

Lubotchka suddenly jumped up and waved her hands about in horror.

"Oh! A bee, a bee!" she shrieked. "It will sting!"

"Nonsense; it won't sting," said Pyotr Dmitritch. "What a coward you are!"

"No, no, no," cried Lubotchka; and looking round at the bees, she walked rapidly back.

Pyotr Dmitritch walked away after her, looking at her with a softened and melancholy face. He was probably thinking, as he looked at her, of his farm, of solitude, and —who knows?—perhaps he was even thinking how snug and cosy life would be at the farm if his wife had been this girl—young, pure, fresh, not corrupted by higher education, not with child. . . .

When the sound of their footsteps had died away, Olga Mihalovna came out of the shanty and turned towards the house. She wanted to cry. She was by now acutely jealous. She could understand that her husband was wor-

ried, dissatisfied with himself and ashamed, and when people are ashamed they hold aloof, above all from those nearest to them, and are unreserved with strangers; she could understand, also, that she had nothing to fear from Lubotchka or from those women who were now drinking coffee indoors. But everything in general was terrible, incomprehensible, and it already seemed to Olga Mihalovna that Pyotr Dmitritch only half belonged to her. . . .

"He has no right to do it!" she muttered, trying to formulate her jealousy and her vexation with her husband. "He has no right at all. I will tell him so plainly!"

She made up her mind to find her husband at once and tell him all about it: it was disgusting, absolutely disgusting, that he was attractive to other women and sought their admiration as though it were some heavenly manna; it was unjust and dishonourable that he should give to others what belonged by right to his wife, that he should hide his soul and his conscience from his wife to reveal them to the first pretty face he came across. What harm had his wife done him? How was she to blame? Long ago she had been sickened by his lying: he was for ever posing, flirting, saying what he did not think, and trying to seem different from what he was and what he ought to be. Why this falsity? Was it seemly in a decent man? If he lied he was demeaning himself and those to whom he lied, and slighting what he lied about. Could he not understand that if he swaggered and posed at the judicial table, or held forth at dinner on the prerogatives of Government, that he, simply to provoke her uncle, was show-

ing thereby that he had not a ha'p'orth of respect for the Court, or himself, or any of the people who were listening and looking at him?

Coming out into the big avenue, Olga Mihalvona assumed an expression of face as though she had just gone away to look after some domestic matter. In the verandah the gentlemen were drinking liqueur and eating strawberries: one of them, the Examining Magistrate—a stout elderly man, *blagueur* and wit—must have been telling some rather free anecdote, for, seeing their hostess, he suddenly clapped his hands over his fat lips, rolled his eyes, and sat down. Olga Mihalovna did not like the local officials. She did not care for their clumsy, ceremonious wives, their scandal-mongering, their frequent visits, their flattery of her husband, whom they all hated. Now, when they were drinking, were replete with food and showed no signs of going away, she felt their presence an agonizing weariness; but not to appear impolite, she smiled cordially to the Magistrate, and shook her finger at him. She walked across the dining-room and drawing-room smiling, and looking as though she had gone to give some order and make some arrangement. "God grant no one stops me," she thought, but she forced herself to stop in the drawing-room to listen from politeness to a young man who was sitting at the piano playing: after standing for a minute, she cried, "Bravo, bravo, M. Georges!" and clapping her hands twice, she went on.

She found her husband in his study. He was sitting at the table, thinking of something. His face looked stern,

thoughtful, and guilty. This was not the same Pyotr Dmitritch who had been arguing at dinner and whom his guests knew, but a different man—wearied, feeling guilty and dissatisfied with himself, whom nobody knew but his wife. He must have come to the study to get cigarettes. Before him lay an open cigarette-case full of cigarettes, and one of his hands was in the table drawer; he had paused and sunk into thought as he was taking the cigarettes.

Olga Mihalovna felt sorry for him. It was as clear as day that this man was harassed, could find no rest, and was perhaps struggling with himself. Olga Mihalovna went up to the table in silence: wanting to show that she had forgotten the argument at dinner and was not cross, she shut the cigarette case and put it in her husband's coat pocket.

"What should I say to him?" she wondered; "I shall say that lying is like a forest—the further one goes into it the more difficult it is to get out of it. I will say to him, 'You have been carried away by the false part you are playing; you have insulted people who were attached to you and have done you no harm. Go and apologize to them, laugh at yourself, and you will feel better. And if you want peace and solitude, let us go away together.'"

Meeting his wife's gaze, Pyotr Dmitritch's face immediately assumed the expression it had worn at dinner and in the garden—indifferent and slightly ironical. He yawned and got up.

"It's past five," he said, looking at his watch. "If our visitors are merciful and leave us at eleven, even then we have another six hours of it. It's a cheerful prospect, there's no denying!"

And whistling something, he walked slowly out of the study with his usual dignified gait. She could hear him with dignified firmness cross the dining-room, then the drawing-room, laugh with dignified assurance, and say to the young man who was playing, "Bravo! bravo!" Soon his footsteps died away: he must have gone out into the garden. And now not jealousy, not vexation, but real hatred of his footsteps, his insincere laugh and voice, took possession of Olga Mihalovna. She went to the window and looked out into the garden. Pyotr Dmitritch was already walking along the avenue. Putting one hand in his pocket and snapping the fingers of the other, he walked with confident swinging steps, throwing his head back a little, and looking as though he were very well satisfied with himself, with his dinner, with his digestion, and with nature. . . .

Two little schoolboys, the children of Madame Tchizhevsky, who had only just arrived, made their appearance in the avenue, accompanied by their tutor, a student wearing a white tunic and very narrow trousers. When they reached Pyotr Dmitritch, the boys and the student stopped, and probably congratulated him on his name-day. With a graceful swing of his shoulders, he patted the children on their cheeks, and carelessly offered the student his hand without looking at him. The student

must have praised the weather and compared it with the climate of Petersburg, for Pyotr Dmitritch said in a loud voice, in a tone as though he were not speaking to a guest, but to an usher of the court or a witness:

"What! It's cold in Petersburg? And here, my good sir, we have a salubrious atmosphere and the fruits of the earth in abundance. Eh? What?"

And thrusting one hand in his pocket and snapping the fingers of the other, he walked on. Till he had disappeared behind the nut bushes, Olga Mihalovna watched the back of his head in perplexity. How had this man of thirty-four come by the dignified deportment of a general? How had he come by that impressive, elegant manner? Where had he got that vibration of authority in his voice? Where had he got these "what's," "to be sure's," and "my good sir's"?

Olga Mihalovna remembered how in the first months of her marriage she had felt dreary at home alone and had driven into the town to the Circuit Court, at which Pyotr Dmitritch had sometimes presided in place of her godfather, Count Alexey Petrovitch. In the presidential chair, wearing his uniform and a chain on his breast, he was completely changed. Stately gestures, a voice of thunder, "what," "to be sure," careless tones. . . . Everything, all that was ordinary and human, all that was individual and personal to himself that Olga Mihalovna was accustomed to seeing in him at home, vanished in grandeur, and in the presidential chair there sat not Pyotr Dmitritch, but another man whom every one called Mr. President.

This consciousness of power prevented him from sitting still in his place, and he seized every opportunity to ring his bell, to glance sternly at the public, to shout. . . . Where had he got his short-sight and his deafness when he suddenly began to see and hear with difficulty, and, frowning majestically, insisted on people speaking louder and coming closer to the table? From the height of his grandeur he could hardly distinguish faces or sounds, so that it seemed that if Olga Mihalovna herself had gone up to him he would have shouted even to her, "Your name?" Peasant witnesses he addressed familiarly, he shouted at the public so that his voice could be heard even in the street, and behaved incredibly with the lawyers. If a lawyer had to speak to him, Pyotr Dmitritch, turning a little away from him, looked with half-closed eyes at the ceiling, meaning to signify thereby that the lawyer was utterly superfluous and that he was neither recognizing him nor listening to him; if a badly-dressed lawyer spoke, Pyotr Dmitritch pricked up his ears and looked the man up and down with a sarcastic, annihilating stare as though to say: "Queer sort of lawyers nowadays!"

"What do you mean by that?" he would interrupt.

If a would-be eloquent lawyer mispronounced a foreign word, saying, for instance, "factitious" instead of "fictitious," Pyotr Dmitritch brightened up at once and asked, "What? How? Factitious? What does that mean?" and then observed impressively: "Don't make use of words you do not understand." And the lawyer, finishing his speech, would walk away from the table, red and

perspiring, while Pyotr Dmitritch, with a self-satisfied smile, would lean back in his chair triumphant. In his manner with the lawyers he imitated Count Alexey Petrovitch a little, but when the latter said, for instance, "Counsel for the defence, you keep quiet for a little!" it sounded paternally good-natured and natural, while the same words in Pyotr Dmitritch's mouth were rude and artificial.

II

There were sounds of applause. The young man had finished playing. Olga Mihalovna remembered her guests and hurried into the drawing-room.

"I have so enjoyed your playing," she said, going up to the piano. "I have so enjoyed it. You have a wonderful talent! But don't you think our piano's out of tune?"

At that moment the two schoolboys walked into the room, accompanied by the student.

"My goodness! Mitya and Kolya," Olga Mihalovna drawled joyfully, going to meet them: "How big they have grown! One would not know you! But where is your mamma?"

"I congratulate you on the name-day," the student began in a free-and-easy tone, "and I wish you all happiness. Ekaterina Andreyevna sends her congratulations and begs you to excuse her. She is not very well."

"How unkind of her! I have been expecting her all day. Is it long since you left Petersburg?" Olga

Mihalovna asked the student. "What kind of weather have you there now?" And without waiting for an answer, she looked cordially at the schoolboys and repeated:

"How tall they have grown! It is not long since they used to come with their nurse, and they are at school already! The old grow older while the young grow up . . . . Have you had dinner?"

"Oh, please don't trouble!" said the student.

"Why, you have not had dinner?"

"For goodness' sake, don't trouble!"

"But I suppose you are hungry?" Olga Mihalovna said it in a harsh, rude voice, with impatience and vexation—it escaped her unawares, but at once she coughed, smiled, and flushed crimson. "How tall they have grown!" she said softly.

"Please don't trouble!" the student said once more.

The student begged her not to trouble; the boys said nothing; obviously all three of them were hungry. Olga Mihalovna took them into the dining-room and told Vassily to lay the table.

"How unkind of your mamma!" she said as she made them sit down. "She has quite forgotten me. Unkind, unkind, unkind . . . you must tell her so. What are you studying?" she asked the student.

"Medicine."

"Well, I have a weakness for doctors, only fancy. I am very sorry my husband is not a doctor. What courage any one must have to perform an operation or dissect a

corpse, for instance! Horrible! Aren't you frightened? I believe I should die of terror! Of course, you drink vodka?"

"Please don't trouble."

"After your journey you must have something to drink. Though I am a woman, even I drink sometimes. And Mitya and Kolya will drink Malaga. It's not a strong wine; you need not be afraid of it. What fine fellows they are, really! They'll be thinking of getting married next."

Olga Mihalovna talked without ceasing; she knew by experience that when she had guests to entertain it was far easier and more comfortable to talk than to listen. When you talk there is no need to strain your attention to think of answers to questions, and to change your expression of face. But unawares she asked the student a serious question; the student began a lengthy speech and she was forced to listen. The student knew that she had once been at the University, and so tried to seem a serious person as he talked to her.

"What subject are you studying?" she asked, forgetting that she had already put that question to him.

"Medicine."

Olga Mihalovna now remembered that she had been away from the ladies for a long while.

"Yes? Then I suppose you are going to be a doctor?" she said, getting up. "That's splendid. I am sorry I did not go in for medicine myself. So you will finish your

dinner here, gentlemen, and then come into the garden. I will introduce you to the young ladies."

She went out and glanced at her watch: it was five minutes to six. And she wondered that the time had gone so slowly, and thought with horror that there were six more hours before midnight, when the party would break up. How could she get through those six hours? What phrases could she utter? How should she behave to her husband?

There was not a soul in the drawing-room or on the verandah. All the guests were sauntering about the garden.

"I shall have to suggest a walk in the birchwood before tea, or else a row in the boats," thought Olga Mihalovna, hurrying to the croquet ground, from which came the sounds of voices and laughter. "And sit the old people down to *vint*. . . ." She met Grigory the footman coming from the croquet ground with empty bottles.

"Where are the ladies?" she asked.

"Among the raspberry-bushes. The master's there, too."

"Oh, good heavens!" some one on the croquet lawn shouted with exasperation. "I have told you a thousand times over! To know the Bulgarians you must see them! You can't judge from the papers!"

Either because of the outburst or for some other reason, Olga Mihalovna was suddenly aware of a terrible weakness all over, especially in her legs and in her shoul-

ders. She felt she could not bear to speak, to listen, or to move.

"Grigory," she said faintly and with an effort, "when you have to serve tea or anything, please don't appeal to me, don't ask me anything, don't speak of anything. . . . Do it all yourself, and . . . and don't make a noise with your feet, I entreat you. . . . I can't, because . . ."

Without finishing, she walked on towards the croquet lawn, but on the way she thought of the ladies, and turned towards the raspberry-bushes. The sky, the air, and the trees looked gloomy again and threatened rain; it was hot and stifling. An immense flock of crows, foreseeing a storm, flew cawing over the garden. The paths were more overgrown, darker, and narrower as they got nearer the kitchen garden. In one of them, buried in a thick tangle of wild pear, crab-apple, sorrel, young oaks, and hopbine, clouds of tiny black flies swarmed round Olga Mihalovna. She covered her face with her hands and began forcing herself to think of the little creature. . . . There floated through her imagination the figures of Grigory, Mitya, Kolya, the faces of the peasants who had come in the morning to present their congratulations. . . .

She heard footsteps, and she opened her eyes. Uncle Nikolay Nikolaitch was coming rapidly towards her.

"It's you, dear? I am very glad . . ." he began, breathless. "A couple of words. . . ." He mopped with his handkerchief his red shaven chin, then suddenly stepped back a pace, flung up his hands and opened his eyes wide. "My dear girl, how long is this going on?" he said rap-

idly, spluttering. "I ask you: is there no limit to it? I say nothing of the demoralizing effect of his martinet views on all around him, of the way he insults all that is sacred and best in me and in every honest thinking man—I will say nothing about that, but he might at least behave decently! Why, he shouts, he bellows, gives himself airs, poses as a sort of Bonaparte, does not let one say a word. . . . I don't know what the devil's the matter with him! These lordly gestures, this condescending tone; and laughing like a general! Who is he, allow me to ask you? I ask you, who is he? The husband of his wife, with a few paltry acres and the rank of a titular who has had the luck to marry an heiress! An upstart and a *junker,* like so many others! A type out of Shtchedrin! Upon my word, it's either that he's suffering from megalomania, or that old rat in his dotage, Count Alexey Petrovitch, is right when he says that children and young people are a long time growing up nowadays, and go on playing they are cabmen and generals till they are forty!"

"That's true, that's true," Olga Mihalovna assented. "Let me pass."

"Now just consider: what is it leading to?" her uncle went on, barring her way. "How will this playing at being a general and a Conservative end? Already he has got into trouble! Yes, to stand his trial. I am very glad of it! That's what his noise and shouting has brought him to—to stand in the prisoner's dock. And it's not as though it were the Circuit Court or something: it's the Central Court! Nothing worse could be imagined, I

think! And then he has quarrelled with every one! He is celebrating his name-day, and look, Vostryakov's not here, nor Yahontov, nor Vladimirov, nor Shevud, nor the Count. . . . There is no one, I imagine, more Conservative than Count Alexey Petrovitch, yet even he has not come. And he never will come again. He won't come, you will see!"

"My God! but what has it to do with me?" asked Olga Mihalovna.

"What has it to do with you? Why, you are his wife! You are clever, you have had a university education, and it was in your power to make him an honest worker!"

"At the lectures I went to they did not teach us how to influence tiresome people. It seems as though I should have to apologize to all of you for having been at the University," said Olga Mihalovna sharply. "Listen, uncle. If people played the same scales over and over again the whole day long in your hearing, you wouldn't be able to sit still and listen, but would run away. I hear the same thing over again for days together all the year round. You must have pity on me at last."

Her uncle pulled a very long face, then looked at her searchingly and twisted his lips into a mocking smile.

"So that's how it is," he piped in a voice like an old woman's. "I beg your pardon!" he said, and made a ceremonious bow. "If you have fallen under his influence yourself, and have abandoned your convictions, you should have said so before. I beg your pardon!"

"Yes, I have abandoned my convictions," she cried. "There; make the most of it!"

"I beg your pardon!"

Her uncle for the last time made her a ceremonious bow, a little on one side, and, shrinking into himself, made a scrape with his foot and walked back.

"Idiot!" thought Olga Mihalovna. "I hope he will go home."

She found the ladies and the young people among the raspberries in the kitchen garden. Some were eating raspberries; others, tired of eating raspberries, were strolling about the strawberry beds or foraging among the sugar-peas. A little on one side of the raspberry bed, near a branching appletree propped up by posts which had been pulled out of an old fence, Pyotr Dmitritch was mowing the grass. His hair was falling over his forehead, his cravat was untied. His watch-chain was hanging loose. Every step and every swing of the scythe showed skill and the possession of immense physical strength. Near him were standing Lubotchka and the daughters of a neighbour, Colonel Bukryeev—two anaemic and unhealthily stout fair girls, Natalya and Valentina, or, as they were always called, Nata and Vata, both wearing white frocks and strikingly like each other. Pyotr Dmitritch was teaching them to mow.

"It's very simple," he said. "You have only to know how to hold the scythe and not to get too hot over it—that is, not to use more force than is necessary! Like this

. . . . Wouldn't you like to try?" he said, offering the scythe to Lubotchka. "Come!"

Lubotchka took the scythe clumsily, blushed crimson, and laughed.

"Don't be afraid, Lubov Alexandrovna!" cried Olga Mihalovna, loud enough for all the ladies to hear that she was with them. "Don't be afraid! You must learn! If you marry a Tolstoyan he will make you mow."

Lubotchka raised the scythe, but began laughing again, and, helpless with laughter, let go of it at once. She was ashamed and pleased at being talked to as though grown up. Nata, with a cold, serious face, with no trace of smiling or shyness, took the scythe, swung it and caught it in the grass; Vata, also without a smile, as cold and serious as her sister, took the scythe, and silently thrust it into the earth. Having done this, the two sisters linked arms and walked in silence to the raspberries.

Pyotr Dmitritch laughed and played about like a boy, and this childish, frolicsome mood in which he became exceedingly good-natured suited him far better than any other. Olga Mihalovna loved him when he was like that. But his boyishness did not usually last long. It did not this time; after playing with the scythe, he for some reason thought it necessary to take a serious tone about it.

"When I am mowing, I feel, do you know, healthier and more normal," he said. "If I were forced to confine myself to an intellectual life I believe I should go out of my mind. I feel that I was not born to be a man of culture! I ought to mow, plough, sow, drive out the horses."

And Pyotr Dmitritch began a converastion with the ladies about the advantages of physical labour, about culture, and then about the pernicious effects of money, of property. Listening to her husband, Olga Mihalovna, for some reason, thought of her dowry.

"And the time will come, I suppose," she thought, "when he will not forgive me for being richer than he. He is proud and vain. Maybe he will hate me because he owes so much to me."

She stopped near Colonel Bukryeev, who was eating raspberries and also taking part in the conversation.

"Come," he said, making room for Olga Mihalovna and Pyotr Dmitritch. "The ripest are here. . . . And so, according to Proudhon," he went on, raising his voice, "property is robbery. But I must confess I don't believe in Proudhon, and don't consider him a philosopher. The French are not authorities, to my thinking—God bless them!"

"Well, as for Proudhons and Buckles and the rest of them, I am weak in that department," said Pyotr Dmitritch. "For philosophy you must apply to my wife. She has been at University lectures and knows all your Schopenhauers and Proudhons by heart. . . ."

Olga Mihalovna felt bored again. She walked again along a little path by apple and pear trees, and looked again as though she was on some very important errand. She reached the gardener's cottage. In the doorway the gardener's wife, Varvara, was sitting together with her four little children with big shaven heads. Varvara, too,

was with child and expecting to be confined on Elijah's Day. After greeting her, Olga Mihalovna looked at her and the children in silence and asked:

"Well, how do you feel?"

"Oh, all right. . . ."

A silence followed. The two women seemed to understand each other without words.

"It's dreadful having one's first baby," said Olga Mihalovna after a moment's thought. "I keep feeling as though I shall not get through it, as though I shall die."

"I fancied that, too, but here I am alive. . . . One has all sorts of fancies."

Varvara, who was just going to have her fifth, looked down a little on her mistress from the height of her experience and spoke in a rather didactic tone, and Olga Mihalovna could not help feeling her authority; she would have liked to have talked of her fears, of the child, of her sensations, but she was afraid it might strike Varvara as naïve and trivial. And she waited in silence for Varvara to say something herself.

"Olya, we are going indoors," Pyotr Dmitritch called from the raspberries.

Olga Mihalovna liked being silent, waiting and watching Varvara. She would have been ready to stay like that till night without speaking or having any duty to perform. But she had to go. She had hardly left the cottage when Lubotchka, Nata, and Vata came running to meet her. The sisters stopped short abruptly a couple of yards away;

Lubotchka ran right up to her and flung herself on her neck.

"You dear, darling, precious," she said, kissing her face and her neck. "Let us go and have tea on the island!"

"On the island, on the island!" said the precisely similar Nata and Vata, both at once, without a smile.

"But it's going to rain, my dears."

"It's not, it's not," cried Lubotchka with a woebegone face. "They've all agreed to go. Dear! darling!"

"They are all getting ready to have tea on the island," said Pyotr Dmitritch, coming up. "See to arranging things. . . . We will all go in the boats, and the samovars and all the rest of it must be sent in the carriage with the servants."

He walked beside his wife and gave her his arm. Olga Mihalovna had a desire to say something disagreeable to her husband, something biting, even about her dowry perhaps—the crueller the better, she felt. She thought a little, and said:

"Why is it Count Alexey Petrovitch hasn't come? What a pity!"

"I am very glad he hasn't come," said Pyotr Dmitritch, lying. "I'm sick to death of that old lunatic."

"But yet before dinner you were expecting him so eagerly!"

III

Half an hour later all the guests were crowding on the bank near the pile to which the boats were fastened. They

were all talking and laughing, and were in such excitement and commotion that they could hardly get into the boats. Three boats were crammed with passengers, while two stood empty. The keys for unfastening these two boats had been somehow mislaid, and messengers were continually running from the river to the house to look for them. Some said Grigory had the keys, others that the baliff had them, while others suggested sending for a blacksmith and breaking the padlocks. And all talked at once, interrupting and shouting one another down. Pyotr Dmitritch paced impatiently to and fro on the bank, shouting:

"What the devil's the meaning of it! The keys ought always to be lying in the hall window! Who has dared to take them away? The baliff can get a boat of his own if he wants one!"

At last the keys were found. Then it appeared that two oars were missing. Again there was a great hullabaloo. Pyotr Dmitritch, who was weary of pacing about the bank, jumped into a long, narrow boat hollowed out of the trunk of a poplar, and, lurching from side to side and almost falling into the water, pushed off from the bank. The other boats followed him one after another, amid loud laughter and the shrieks of the young ladies.

The white cloudy sky, the trees on the riverside, the boats with the people in them, and the oars, were reflected in the water as in a mirror; under the boats, far away below in the bottomless depths, was a second sky with the birds flying across it. The bank on which the

house and gardens stood was high, steep, and covered with trees; on the other, which was sloping, stretched broad green water-meadows with sheets of water glistening in them. The boats had floated a hundred yards when, behind the mournfully drooping willows on the sloping banks, huts and a herd of cows came into sight; they began to hear songs, drunken shouts, and the strains of a concertina.

Here and there on the river fishing-boats were scattered about, setting their nets for the night. In one of these boats was the festive party, playing on home-made violins and violoncellos.

Olga Mihalovna was sitting at the rudder; she was smiling affably and talking a great deal to entertain her visitors, while she glanced steathily at her husband. He was ahead of them all, standing up punting with one oar. The light sharp-nosed canoe, which all the guests called the "death-trap"— while Pyotr Dmitritch, for some reason, called it *Penderaklia*—flew along quickly; it had a brisk, crafty expression, as though it hated its heavy occupant and was looking out for a favourable moment to glide away from under his feet. Olga Mihalovna kept looking at her husband, and she loathed his good looks which attracted every one, the back of his head, his attitude, his familiar manner with women; she hated all the women sitting in the boat with her, was jealous, and at the same time was trembling every minute in terror that the frail craft would upset and cause an accident.

"Take care, Pyotr!" she cried, while her heart fluttered with terror. "Sit down! We believe in your courage without all that!"

She was worried, too, by the people who were in the boat with her. They were all ordinary good sort of people like thousands of others, but now each one of them struck her as exceptional and evil. In each one of them she saw nothing but falsity. "That young man," she thought, "rowing, in gold-rimmed spectacles, with chestnut hair and a nice-looking beard: he is a mamma's darling, rich, and well-fed, and always fortunate, and every one considers him an honourable, free-thinking, advanced man. It's not a year since he left the University and came to live in the district, but he already talks of himself as 'we active members of the Zemstvo.' But in another year he will be bored like so many others and go off to Petersburg, and to justify running away, will tell every one that the Zemstvos are good-for-nothing, and that he has been deceived in them. While from the other boat his young wife keeps her eyes fixed on him, and believes that he is 'an active member of the Zemstvo,' just as in a year she will believe that the Zemstvo is good-for-nothing. And that stout, carefully shaven gentleman in the straw hat with the broad ribbon, with an expensive cigar in his mouth: he is fond of saying, 'It is time to put away dreams and set to work!' He has Yorkshire pigs, Butler's hives, rape-seed, pine-apples, a dairy, a cheese factory, Italian bookkeeping by double entry; but every summer he sells his timber and mortgages part of his land

to spend the autumn with his mistress in the Crimea. And there's Uncle Nikolay Nikolaitch, who has quarrelled with Pyotr Dmitritch, and yet for some reason does not go home."

Olga Mihalovna looked at the other boats, and there, too, she saw only uninteresting, queer creatures, affected or stupid people. She thought of all the people she knew in the district, and could not remember one person of whom one could say or think anything good. They all seemed to her mediocre, insipid, unintelligent, narrow, false, heartless; they all said what they did not think, and did what they did not want to. Dreariness and despair were stifling her; she longed to leave off smiling, to leap up and cry out, "I am sick of you," and then jump out and swim to the bank.

"I say, let's take Pyotr Dmitritch in tow!" some one shouted.

"In tow, in tow!" the others chimed in. "Olga Mihalovna, take your husband in tow."

To take him in tow, Olga Mihalovna, who was steering, had to seize the right moment and to catch hold of his boat by the chain at the beak. When she bent over to the chain Pyotr Dmitritch frowned and looked at her in alarm.

"I hope you won't catch cold," he said.

"If you are uneasy about me and the child, why do you torment me?" thought Olga Mihalovna.

Pyotr Dmitritch acknowledged himself vanquished, and, not caring to be towed, jumped from the *Penderaklia* into the boat which was overful already, and jumped so care-

lessly that the boat lurched violently, and every one cried out in terror.

"He did that to please the ladies," thought Olga Mihalovna; "he knows it's charming." Her hands and feet began trembling, as she supposed, from boredom, vexation from the strain of smiling and the discomfort she felt all over her body. And to conceal this trembling from her guests, she tried to talk more loudly, to laugh, to move.

"If I suddenly begin to cry," she thought, "I shall say I have toothache. . . ."

But at last the boats reached the "Island of Good Hope," as they called the peninsula formed by a bend in the river at an acute angle, covered with a copse of old birch-trees, oaks, willows, and poplars. The tables were already laid under the trees; the samovars were smoking, and Vassily and Grigory, in their swallow-tails and white knitted gloves, were already busy with the tea-things. On the other bank, opposite the "Island of Good Hope," there stood the carriages which had come with the provisions. The baskets and parcels of provisions were carried across to the island in a little boat like the *Penderaklia*. The footmen, the coachmen, and even the peasant who was sitting in the boat, had the solemn expression befitting a name-day such as one only sees in children and servants.

While Olga Mihalovna was making the tea and pouring out the first glasses, the visitors were busy with the liqueurs and sweet things. Then there was the general commotion usual at picnics over drinking tea, very weari-

some and exhausting for the hostess. Grigory and Vassily had hardly had time to take the glasses round before hands were being stretched out to Olga Mihalovna with empty glasses. One asked for no sugar, another wanted it stronger, another weak, a fourth declined another glass. And all this Olga Mihalovna had to remember, and then to call, "Ivan Petrovitch, is it without sugar for you?" or, "Gentlemen, which of you wanted it weak?" But the guest who had asked for weak tea, or no sugar, had by now forgotten it, and, absorbed in agreeable conversation, took the first glass that came. Depressed-looking figures wandered like shadows at a little distance from the table, pretending to look for mushrooms in the grass, or reading the labels on the boxes—these were those for whom there were not glasses enough. "Have you had tea?" Olga Mihalovna kept asking, and the guest so addressed begged her not to trouble, and said, "I will wait," though it would have suited her better for the visitors not to wait but to make haste.

Some, absorbed in conversation, drank their tea slowly, keeping their glasses for half an hour; others, especially some who had drunk a good deal at dinner, would not leave the table, and kept on drinking glass after glass, so that Olga Mihalovna scarcely had time to fill them. One jocular young man sipped his tea through a lump of sugar, and kept saying, "Sinful man that I am, I love to indulge myself with the Chinese herb." He kept asking with a heavy sigh: "Another tiny dish of tea more, if you please." He drank a great deal, nibbled his sugar, and

thought it all very amusing and original, and imagined that he was doing a clever imitation of a Russian merchant. None of them understood that these trifles were agonizing to their hostess, and, indeed, it was hard to understand it, as Olga Mihalovna went on all the time smiling affably and talking nonsense.

But she felt ill. . . . She was irritated by the crowd of people, the laughter, the questions, the jocular young man, the footmen harassed and run off their legs, the children who hung round the table; she was irritated at Vata's being like Nata, at Kolya's being like Mitya, so that one could not tell which of them had had tea and which of them had not. She felt that her smile of forced affability was passing into an expression of anger, and she felt every minute as though she would burst into tears.

"Rain, my friends," cried some one.

Every one looked at the sky.

"Yes, it really is rain . . ." Pyotr Dmitritch assented, and wiped his cheek.

Only a few drops were falling from the sky—the real rain had not begun yet; but the company abandoned their tea and made haste to get off. At first they all wanted to drive home in the carriages, but changed their minds and made for the boats. On the pretext that she had to hasten home to give directions about the supper, Olga Mihalovna asked to be excused for leaving the others, and went home in the carriage.

When she got into the carriage, she first of all let her face rest from smiling. With an angry face she drove through the village, and with an angry face acknowledged the bows of the peasants she met. When she got home, she went to the bedroom by the back way and lay down on her husband's bed.

"Merciful God!" she whispered. "What is all this hard labour for? Why do all these people hustle each other here and pretend that they are enjoying themselves? Why do I smile and lie? I don't understand it."

She heard steps and voices. The visitors had come back.

"Let them come," thought Olga Mihalovna; "I shall lie a little longer."

But a maid-servant came and said:

"Marya Grigoryevna is going, madam."

Olga Mihalovna jumped up, tidied her hair and hurried out of the room.

"Marya Grigoryevna, what is the meaning of this?" she began in an injured voice, going to meet Marya Grigoryevna. "Why are you in such a hurry?"

"I can't help it, darling! I've stayed too long as it is; my children are expecting me home."

"It's too bad of you! Why didn't you bring your children with you?"

"If you let me, dear, I will bring them on some ordinary day, but to-day . . ."

"Oh, please do," Olga Mihalovna interrupted; "I shall be delighted! Your children are so sweet! Kiss them all

for me. . . . But, really, I am offended with you! I don't understand why you are in such a hurry!"

"I really must, I really must. . . . Good-bye, dear. Take care of yourself. In your condition, you know . . ."

And the ladies kissed each other. After seeing the departing guest to her carriage, Olga Mihalovna went in to the ladies in the drawing-room. There the lamps were already lighted and the gentlemen were sitting down to cards.

IV

The party broke up after supper about a quarter past twelve. Seeing her visitors off, Olga Mihalovna stood at the door and said:

"You really ought to take a shawl! It's turning a little chilly. Please God, you don't catch cold!"

"Don't trouble, Olga Mihalovna," the ladies answered as they got into the carriage. "Well, good-bye. Mind now, we are expecting you; don't play us false!"

"Wo-o-o!" the coachman checked the horses.

"Ready, Denis! Good-bye, Olga Mihalovna!"

"Kiss the children for me!"

The carriage started and immediately disappeared into the darkness. In the red circle of light cast by the lamp in the road, a fresh pair or trio of impatient horses, and the silhouette of a coachman with his hands held out stiffly before him, would come into view. Again there began kisses, reproaches, and entreaties to come again or

to take a shawl. Pyotr Dmitritch kept running out and helping the ladies into their carriages.

"You go now by Efremovshtchina," he directed the coachman; "it's nearer through Mankino, but the road is worse that way. You might have an upset. . . . Good-bye, my charmer. *Mille compliments* to your artist!"

"Good-bye, Olga Mihalovna, darling! Go indoors, or you will catch cold! It's damp!"

"Wo-o-o! you rascal!"

"What horses have you got here?" Pyotr Dmitritch asked.

"They were bought from Haidorov, in Lent," answered the coachman.

"Capital horses. . . ."

And Pyotr Dmitritch patted the trace horse on the haunch.

"Well, you can start! God give you good luck!"

The last visitor was gone at last; the red circle on the road quivered, moved aside, contracted and went out, as Vassily carried away the lamp from the entrance. On previous occasions when they had seen off their visitors, Pyotr Dmitritch and Olga Mihalovna had begun dancing about the drawing-room, facing each other, clapping their hands and singing: "They've gone! They've gone!" But now Olga Mihalovna was not equal to that. She went to her bedroom, undressed, and got into bed.

She fancied she would fall asleep at once and sleep soundly. Her legs and her shoulders ached painfully, her head was heavy from the strain of talking, and she was

conscious, as before, of discomfort all over her body. Covering her head over, she lay still for three or four minutes, then peeped out from under the bed-clothes at the lamp before the ikon, listened to the silence, and smiled.

"It's nice, it's nice," she whispered, curling up her legs, which felt as if they had grown longer from so much walking. "Sleep, sleep. . . ."

Her legs would not get into a comfortable position; she felt uneasy all over, and she turned on the other side. A big fly blew buzzing about the bedroom and thumped against the ceiling. She could hear, too, Grigory and Vassily stepping cautiously about the drawing-room, putting the chairs back in their places; it seemed to Olga Mihalovna that she could not go to sleep, nor be comfortable till those sounds were hushed. And again she turned over on the other side impatiently.

She heard her husband's voice in the drawing-room. Some one must be staying the night, as Pyotr Dmitritch was addressing some one and speaking loudly:

"I don't say that Count Alexey Petrovitch is an impostor. But he can't help seeming to be one, because all of you gentlemen attempt to see in him something different from what he really is. His craziness is looked upon as originality, his familiar manners as good-nature, and his complete absence of opinions as Conservatism. Even granted that he is a Conservative of the stamp of '84, what after all is Conservatism?"

Pyotr Dmitritch, angry with Count Alexey Petrovitch, his visitors, and himself, was relieving his heart. He abused both the Count and his visitors, and in his vexation with himself was ready to speak out and to hold forth upon anything. After seeing his guest to his room, he walked up and down the drawing-room, walked through the dining-room, down the corridor, then into his study, then again went into the drawing-room, and came into the bedroom. Olga Mihalovna was lying on her back, with the bed-clothes only to her waist (by now she felt hot), and with an angry face, watched the fly that was thumping against the ceiling.

"Is some one staying the night?" she asked.

"Yegorov."

Pyotr Dmitritch undressed and got into his bed. Without speaking, he lighted a cigarette, and he, too, fell to watching the fly. There was an uneasy and forbidding look in his eyes. Olga Mihalovna looked at his handsome profile for five minutes in silence. It seemed to her for some reason that if her husband were suddenly to turn facing her, and to say, "Olga, I am unhappy," she would cry or laugh, and she would be at ease. She fancied that her legs were aching and her body was uncomfortable all over because of the strain on her feelings.

"Pyotr, what are you thinking of?" she said.

"Oh, nothing . . ." her husband answered.

"You have taken to having secrets from me of late: that's not right."

"Why is it not right?" answered Pyotr Dmitritch drily and not at once. "We all have our personal life, every one of us, and we are bound to have our secrets."

"Personal life, our secrets . . . that's all words! Understand you are wounding me!" said Olga Mihalovna, sitting up in bed. "If you have a load on your heart, why do you hide it from me? And why do you find it more suitable to open your heart to women who are nothing to you, instead of to your wife? I overheard your outpourings to Lubotchka by the bee-house to-day."

"Well, I congratulate you. I am glad you did overhear it."

This meant "Leave me alone and let me think." Olga Mihalovna was indignant. Vexation, hatred, and wrath, which had been accumulating within her during the whole day, suddenly boiled over; she wanted at once to speak out, to hurt her husband without putting it off till to-morrow, to wound him, to punish him. . . . Making an effort to control herself and not to scream, she said:

"Let me tell you, then, that it's all loathsome, loathsome, loathsome! I've been hating you all day; you see what you've done."

Pyotr Dmitritch, too, got up and sat on the bed.

"It's loathsome, loathsome, loathsome," Olga Mihalovna went on, beginning to tremble all over. "There's no need to congratulate me; you had better congratulate yourself! It's a shame, a disgrace. You have wrapped yourself in lies till you are ashamed to be alone in the room with your

wife! You are a deceitful man! I see through you and understand every step you take!"

"Olya, I wish you would please warn me when you are out of humour. Then I will sleep in the study."

Saying this, Pyotr Dmitritch picked up his pillow and walked out of the bedroom. Olga Mihalovna had not foreseen this. For some minutes she remained silent with her mouth open, trembling all over and looking at the door by which her husband had gone out, and trying to understand what it meant. Was this one of the devices to which deceitful people have recourse when they are in the wrong, or was it a deliberate insult aimed at her pride? How was she to take it? Olga Mihalovna remembered her cousin, a lively young officer, who often used to tell her, laughing, that when "his spouse nagged at him" at night, he usually picked up his pillow and went whistling to spend the night in his study, leaving his wife in a foolish and ridiculous position. This officer was married to a rich, capricious, and foolish woman whom he did not respect but simply put up with.

Olga Mihalovna jumped out of bed. To her mind there was only one thing left for her to do now; to dress with all possible haste and to leave the house forever. The house was her own, but so much the worse for Pyotr Dmitritch. Without pausing to consider whether this was necessary or not, she went quickly to the study to inform her husband of her intention ("Feminine logic!" flashed through her mind), and to say something wounding and sarcastic at parting. . . .

Pyotr Dmitritch was lying on the sofa and pretending to read a newspaper. There was a candle burning on a chair near him. His face could not be seen behind the newspaper.

"Be so kind as to tell me what this means? I am asking you."

"Be so kind . . ." Pyotr Dmitritch mimicked her, not showing his face. "It's sickening, Olga! Upon my honour, I am exhausted and not up to it. . . . Let us do our quarrelling to-morrow."

"No, I understand you perfectly!" Olga Mihalovna went on. "You hate me! Yes, yes! You hate me because I am richer than you! You will never forgive me for that, and will always be lying to me!" ("Feminine logic!" flashed through her mind again.) "You are laughing at me now. . . . I am convinced, in fact, that you only married me in order to have property qualifications and those wretched horses. . . . Oh, I am miserable!"

Pyotr Dmitritch dropped the newspaper and got up. The unexpected insult overwhelmed him. With a childishly helpless smile he looked desperately at his wife, and holding out his hands to her as though to ward off blows, he said imploringly:

"Olya!"

And expecting her to say something else awful, he leaned back in his chair, and his huge figure seemed as helplessly childish as his smile.

"Olya, how could you say it?" he whispered.

Olga Mihalovna came to herself. She was suddenly aware of her passionate love for this man, remembered that he was her husband, Pyotr Dmitritch, without whom she could not live for a day, and who loved her passionately, too. She burst into loud sobs that sounded strange and unlike her, and ran back to her bedroom.

She fell on the bed, and short hysterical sobs, choking her and making her arms and legs twitch, filled the bedroom. Remembering there was a visitor sleeping three or four rooms away, she buried her head under the pillow to stifle her sobs, but the pillow rolled on to the floor, and she almost fell on the floor herself when she stooped to pick it up. She pulled the quilt up to her face, but her hands would not obey her, but tore convulsively at everything she clutched.

She thought that everything was lost, that the falsehood she had told to wound her husband had shattered her life into fragments. Her husband would not forgive her. The insult she had hurled at him was not one that could be effaced by any caresses, by any vows. . . . How could she convince her husband that she did not believe what she had said?

"It's all over, it's all over!" she cried, not noticing that the pillow had slipped on to the floor again. "For God's sake, for God's sake!"

Probably roused by her cries, the guest and the servants were now awake; next day all the neighbourhood would know that she had been in hysterics and would blame Pyotr Dmitritch. She made an effort to restrain

herself, but her sobs grew louder and louder every minute.

"For God's sake," she cried in a voice not like her own, and not knowing why she cried it. "For God's sake!"

She felt as though the bed were heaving under her and her feet were entangled in the bed-clothes. Pyotr Dmitritch, in his dressing-gown, with a candle in his hand, came into the bedroom.

"Olya, hush!" he said.

She raised herself, and kneeling up in bed, screwing up her eyes at the light, articulated through her sobs:

"Understand . . . understand! . . ."

She wanted to tell him that she was tired to death by the party, by his falsity, by her own falsity, that it had all worked together, but she could only articulate:

"Understand . . . understand!"

"Come, drink!" he said, handing her some water.

She took the glass obediently and began drinking, but the water splashed over and was spilt on her arms, her throat and knees.

"I must look horribly unseemly," she thought.

Pyotr Dmitritch put her back in bed without a word, and covered her with the quilt, then he took the candle and went out.

"For God's sake!" Olga Mihalovna cried again. "Pyotr, understand, understand!"

Suddenly something gripped her in the lower part of her body and back with such violence that her wailing was cut short, and she bit the pillow from the pain. But the

pain let her go again at once, and she began sobbing again.

The maid came in, and arranging the quilt over her, asked in alarm:

"Mistress, darling, what is the matter?"

"Go out of the room," said Pyotr Dmitritch sternly, going up to the bed.

"Understand . . . understand! . . ." Olga Mihalovna began.

"Olya, I entreat you, calm yourself," he said. "I did not mean to hurt you. I would not have gone out of the room if I had known it would have hurt you so much; I simply felt depressed. I tell you, on my honour . . ."

"Understand! . . . You were lying, I was lying. . . ."

"I understand. . . . Come, come, that's enough! I understand," said Pyotr Dmitritch tenderly, sitting down on her bed. "You said that in anger; I quite understand. I swear to God I love you beyond anything on earth, and when I married you I never once thought of your being rich. I loved you immensely, and that's all . . . I assure you. I have never been in want of money or felt the value of it, and so I cannot feel the difference between your fortune and mine. It always seemed to me we were equally well off. And that I have been deceitful in little things, that . . . of course, is true. My life has hitherto been arranged in such a frivolous way that it has somehow been impossible to get on without paltry lying. It weighs on me, too, now. . . . Let us leave off talking about it, for goodness' sake!"

Olga Mihalovna again felt in acute pain, and clutched her husband by the sleeve.

"I am in pain, in pain, in pain . . ." she said rapidly. "Oh, what pain!"

"Damnation take those visitors!" muttered Pyotr Dmitritch, getting up. "You ought not to have gone to the island to-day!" he cried. "What an idiot I was not to prevent you ! Oh, my God!"

He scratched his head in vexation, and, with a wave of his hand, walked out of the room.

Then he came into the room several times, sat down on the bed beside her, and talked a great deal, sometimes tenderly, sometimes angrily, but she hardly heard him. Her sobs were continually interrupted by fearful attacks of pain, and each time the pain was more acute and prolonged. At first she held her breath and bit the pillow during the pain, but then she began screaming on an unseemly piercing note. Once seeing her husband near her, she remembered that she had insulted him, and without pausing to think whether it were really Pyotr Dmitritch or whether she were in delirium, clutched his hand in both hers and began kissing it.

"You were lying, I was lying . . ." she began justifying herself. "Understand, understand. . . . They have exhausted me, driven me out of all patience."

"Olya, we are not alone," said Pyotr Dmitritch.

Olga Mihalovna raised her head and saw Varvara, who was kneeling by the chest of drawers and pulling out the bottom drawer. The top drawers were already open.

Then Varvara got up, red from the strained position, and with a cold, solemn face began trying to unlock a box.

"Marya, I can't unlock it!" she said in a whisper. "You unlock it, won't you?"

Marya, the maid, was digging a candle end out of the candlestick with a pair of scissors, so as to put in a new candle; she went up to Varvara and helped her to unlock the box.

"There should be nothing locked . . ." whispered Varvara. "Unlock this basket, too, my good girl. Master," she said, "you should send to Father Mihail to unlock the holy gates! You must!"

"Do what you like," said Pyotr Dmitritch, breathing hard, "only, for God's sake, make haste and fetch the doctor or the midwife! Has Vassily gone? Send some one else. Send your husband!"

"It's the birth," Olga Mihalovna thought. "Varvara," she moaned, "but he won't be born alive!"

"It's all right, it's all right, mistress," whispered Varvara. "Please God, he will be alive! he will be alive!"

When Olga Mihalovna came to herself again after a pain she was no longer sobbing nor tossing from side to side, but moaning. She could not refrain from moaning even in the intervals between the pains. The candles were still burning, but the morning light was coming through the blinds. It was probably about five o'clock in the morning. At the round table there was sitting some unknown woman with a very discreet air, wearing a white apron. From her whole appearance it was evident she had been

sitting there a long time. Olga Mihalovna guessed that she was the midwife.

"Will it soon be over?" she asked, and in her voice she heard a peculiar and unfamiliar note which had never been there before. "I must be dying in childbirth," she thought.

Pyotr Dmitritch came cautiously into the bedroom, dressed for the day, and stood at the window with his back to his wife. He lifted the blind and looked out the window.

"What rain!" he said.

"What time is it?" asked Olga Mihalovna, in order to hear the unfamiliar note in her voice again.

"A quarter to six," answered the midwife.

"And what if I really am dying?" thought Olga Mihalovna, looking at her husband's head and the window-panes on which the rain was beating. "How will he live without me? With whom will he have tea and dinner, talk in the evenings, sleep?"

And he seemed to her like a forlorn child; she felt sorry for him and wanted to say something nice, caressing and consolatory. She remembered how in the spring he had meant to buy himself some harriers, and she, thinking it a cruel and dangerous sport, had prevented him from doing it.

"Pyotr, buy yourself harriers," she moaned.

He dropped the blind and went up to the bed, and would have said something; but at that moment the pain came

back, and Olga Mihalovna uttered an unseemly, piercing scream.

The pain and the constant screaming and moaning stupefied her. She heard, saw, and sometimes spoke, but hardly understood anything, and was only conscious that she was in pain or was just going to be in pain. It seemed to her that the name-day party had been long, long ago—not yesterday, but a year ago perhaps; and that her new life of agony had lasted longer than her childhood, her school-days, her time at the University, and her marriage, and would go on for a long, long time, endlessly. She saw them bring tea to the midwife, and summon her at midday to lunch and afterwards to dinner; she saw Pyotr Dmitritch grow used to coming in, standing for long intervals by the window,and going out again; saw strange men, the maid, Varvara, come in as though they were at home. . . . Varvara said nothing but, "He will, he will," and was angry when any one closed the drawers and the chest. Olga Mihalovna saw the light change in the room and in the windows: at one time it was twilight, then thick like fog, then bright daylight as it had been at dinner-time the day before, then again twilight . . . and each of these changes lasted as long as her childhood, her school-days, her life at the University. . . .

In the evening two doctors—one bony, bald, with a big red beard; the other with a swarthy Jewish face and cheap spectacles—performed some sort of operation on Olga Mihalovna. To these unknown men touching her body she felt utterly indifferent. By now she had no feeling

of shame, no will, and any one might do what he would with her. If any one had rushed at her with a knife, or had insulted Pyotr Dmitritch, or had robbed her of her right to the little creature, she would not have said a word.

They gave her chloroform during the operation. When she came to again, the pain was still there and insufferable. It was night. And Olga Mihalovna remembered that there had been just such a night with the stillness, the lamp, with the midwife sitting motionless by the bed, with the drawers of the chest pulled out, with Pyotr Dmitritch standing by the window, but some time very, very long ago. . .

V

"I am not dead . . ." thought Olga Mihalovna when she began to understand her surroundings again, and when the pain was over.

A bright summer day looked in at the widely open windows; in the garden below the windows, the sparrows and the magpies never ceased chattering for one instant.

The drawers were shut now, her husband's bed had been made. There was no sign of the midwife or of the maid, or of Varvara in the room, only Pyotr Dmitritch was standing, as before, motionless by the window looking into the garden. There was no sound of a child's crying, no one was congratulating her or rejoicing, it was evident that the little creature had not been born alive.

"Pyotr!"

Olga Mihalovna called to her husband.

Pyotr Dmitritch looked round. It seemed as though a long time must have passed since the last guest had departed and Olga Mihalovna had insulted her husband, for Pyotr Dmitritch was perceptibly thinner and hollow-eyed.

"What is it?" he asked, coming up to the bed.

He looked away, moved his lips and smiled with child-like helplessness.

"Is it all over?" asked Olga Mihalovna.

Pyotr Dmitritch tried to make some answer, but his lips quivered and his mouth worked like a toothless old man's, like Uncle Nikolay Nikolaitch's.

"Olya," he said, wringing his hands; big tears suddenly dropping from his eyes. "Olya, I don't care about your property qualification, nor the Circuit Courts . . ." (he gave a sob) "nor particular views, nor those visitors, nor your fortune. . . . I don't care about anything! Why didn't we take care of our child? Oh, it's no good talking!"

With a despairing gesture he went out of the bedroom.

But nothing mattered to Olga Mihalovna now, there was a mistiness in her brain from the chloroform, an emptiness in her soul. . . . The dull indifference to life which had overcome her when the two doctors were performing the operation still had possession of her.

CLASS A BINDING
FEB 5 1963
MODERN

WITHDRAWN
FEB 18 2021
By: ....

CULVER-UNION TWP. PUBLIC LIBRARY
SHORT STORIES BES

Best short stories of the world

3 4304 00012 6421